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MORAY &  
NAIRN



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Received 10 Aug., 1899.



*The County Histories of Scotland*

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MORAY AND NAIRN





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*The County Histories of Scotland*

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MORAY AND NAIRN



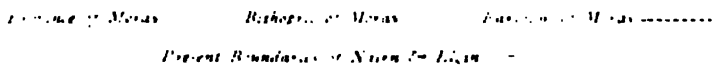






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A HISTORY  
OF  
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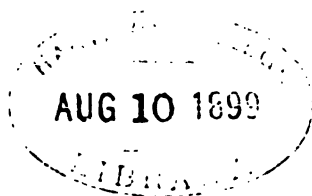
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## PREFATORY NOTE.

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IN its endeavour to tell the story of the old province of Moray with accuracy, and at the same time in popular language, the present volume follows strictly in the lines of the previous volumes of the series. But it differs from its predecessors in the arrangement adopted. It appeared to the writer that by treating the Province, the Bishopric, the Earldom, &c., as separate subjects, he would be able to lay before the reader a more sharply defined picture of their nature, progress, and influence than if he had employed the more ordinary narrative form. He is far from maintaining that such an arrangement is in all instances the best. But in the case of Moray and Nairn the sequence of events seemed to lend itself to this disposition—the historical importance and interest of the one having, roughly speaking, ceased, or at least begun to wane, before those of the other waxed.

In a work of this kind there are necessarily many matters of detail which are not to be found in books, and which are only to be obtained from persons having the requisite local knowledge. The author desires to express his grateful acknowledgments to the many individuals—with not a few of whom he was personally unacquainted—who have so courteously assisted him in this way. To the Earl of Moray; to Captain A. H. Dunbar, younger of Northfield, who, in addition to much valuable information about his own family, did him the additional favour of reading over the chapters on the Bishopric and Earldom; to Captain Edward Dunbar-Dunbar of Sea Park and Glen-of-Rothies, the greatest local authority on the old social life of the district; to the late Rev. Dr Walter Gregor for access to his unrivalled store of local folk-lore; to Mr George Bain, the historian of Nairnshire; to Dr James MacDonald and Mr Hugh W. Young of Burghead; to Mr J. Balfour Paul, Lyon King-of-Arms; to Sheriff Mackay; to the Rev. Dr Cooper of Aberdeen; to the editors of the local papers; and to many others who, he hopes, will accept this general recognition of their assistance, he is under great obligations. To the relatives of the distinguished men whose lives are sketched in outline in the last chapter he has a similar acknowledgment to make. From Miss C. F. Gordon Cumming, and her brother Colonel

William Gordon Cumming, he obtained many interesting facts, now for the first time published, relative to the career of their brother Roualeyn, the well-known lion-hunter. To Mrs M'Kenzie, Ellonville, Inverness, he is indebted for access to the home-letters of her brother Colonel Grant of Househill, the distinguished African traveller. To Miss Brown, Muirton, Craigellachie, he owes almost all that is new in the sketch of her uncle, General Sir George Brown, G.C.B.; and a similar remark applies to the facilities placed at his disposal by Mr W. R. Skinner of Drumin, for the preparation of the memoir of his relative William Marshall, —one of the greatest, and certainly the most modest, of Scotland's musicians. The plan of Elgin Cathedral and Precincts is from a drawing prepared by George Sutherland, Esq. He has finally to acknowledge his indebtedness to Mr J. D. Yeadon, bookseller, Elgin; Mr W. Harrison, bookseller, Nairn; and other local authorities, for much assistance in the compilation of the Bibliography.







## CONTENTS.

### I.

#### THE PROVINCE OF MORAY.

	PAGE
The province of Moray : its boundaries, designation, and inhabitants	
—Prehistoric annals, and their teaching—Stone circles of Clava	
—The Pict of Moray : his religion and his social polity—	
Burghead—The Pictish kings—The Columbite Church—The	
Picts and the Scots—Disappearance of Pictavia, and independ-	
ence of Moravia—The Scandinavians in Moravia—The battle of	
Torfness and the death of Duncan—Sueno's stone near Forres—	
Macbeth—Malcolm Ceanmor—The Maormors—Moravia under	
David I.—Thanes and earls—The partition of the kingdom into	
counties wipes out the old provincial delimitations—The modern	
province of Moray . . . . .	I

### II.

#### THE BISHOPRIC OF MORAY.

The bishopric of Moray founded by Alexander I.—The churches of  
Birmie, Kinneddar, and Spynie the cathedrals of the bishops of  
Moray—Elgin Cathedral—The constitution of the chapter—The  
early bishops of Moray—The raid of the Wolf of Badenoch—The  
Castle of Spynie—The power of the bishops—Bishop Forman—  
The restored cathedral—The rank and duties and emoluments

of the dignitaries—Patrick Hepburn, the last Roman Catholic bishop of Moray—The Protestant bishops: Guthrie, Mackenzie, Aitken, Falconar—The cathedral allowed to fall into decay—John Shanks, the Cobbler—The priory of Pluscarden—The Abbey of Kinloss . . . . . 51

### III.

#### THE EARLDOM OF MORAY.

The men of Moray a danger to the State—They are driven to the hills, and the Laigh granted to foreign settlers—The freemen of Moray loyal to Bruce—The castle of Elgin—King Edward's peaceful conquest of Scotland—The battle of Stirling—John, Earl of Buchan, Edward's lieutenant in Moray—Bannockburn—Randolph, first Earl of Moray—The Randolphs—The Dunbars: "Black Agnes of Dunbar"—The Douglasses—The Stewarts—The Gordons: "The Cock of the North"—The Stewarts again: "The good Earl of Moray," "The bonnie Earl of Moray"—Earl Francis, the Arboriculturist—The earl and the sheriff . . . . . 119

### IV.

#### COUNTY FAMILIES OF MORAY AND NAIRN.

The story of the Gordons properly belongs to Aberdeen and Banff—The Grants: the first settlement of the family in 1316—They make many acquisitions of property—And in 1694 obtain a charter from William and Mary consolidating their estates—Sheumas nan Creach—John, the fifth Laird—The romance of the seventh Laird—Montrose and the Grants—"The Highland King"—The battle of Cromdale—The '15 and the '45—Culloden—"The good Sir James"—Later lairds—The Duffs: their origin and acquisitions of property—William Duff of Dipple—Peers of Ireland—The later earls—The Gordons of Gordonstoun: "Sir Robert the Wizard"—The second Sir Robert—The Kinnairds of Culbin: the Culbin sands—The lairds of Cawdor: Cawdor Castle—Later fortunes of the family—The Roses of Kilravock—The Brodies of Brodie . . . . . 169

V.

THE TOWNS OF MORAY AND NAIRN.

Elgin : not the natural capital, but made so because of the cathedral—The town's debt to the church—Its appearance—Its progress under the earldom—The Earl of Dunfermline, Provost—The incorporated trades—Political corruption—The unincorporated trades—Findhorn and Lossiemouth, and the Continental trade—Education—Forres—Nairn . . . . .	263
--	-----

VI.

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE.

Population of Moray and of Nairn—Census of occupation—Climate, soil, and physiographical position—The Moray floods—Geology—Progress of agriculture—Timber—The Morayshire Farmers' Club and its good offices for agriculture—The housing of the rural population—Rural "ploys": the penny wedding—Lyke-wakes—"Rants" and "tweetles"—Shinty and "the bools"—Food and drink—The care of the poor—Fastern's eve—Beltane—Michaelmas—Hallowe'en—Hogmanay—Superstitions—The fisher-folk—Modern characteristics of the counties . . . . .	285
---	-----

VII.

DISTINGUISHED MEN OF MORAY AND NAIRN.

Florence Wilson—Lachlan Shaw—Isaac Forsyth—William Leslie—James Grant—Provost Grant—Sir Thomas Dick Lauder—Cosmo Innes—Charles St John—Dr George Gordon—William Hay—William Marshall—Roualeyn George Gordon Cumming—William Gordon Cumming—Constance Frederica Gordon Cumming—James Augustus Grant—Sir George Brown . . . . .	353
---	-----

---

LIST OF BOOKS RELATING TO MORAY AND NAIRN . . . . .	417
LIST OF MAPS OF MORAY AND NAIRN . . . . .	430
INDEX . . . . .	431

## LIST OF MAPS.

---

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <p>✓ MORAVIA SCOTIÆ PROVINCIA, <i>ex</i> Timothei Pont<br/> <i>scedis descripta et aucta per</i> Robert Gordonium<br/> <i>à Strathloch</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>From Blaeu's Great Atlas, 1654.</i></p> | } | <i>In pocket at begin-<br/>             ning of volume.</i> |
|  |   |   |
| <p>✓ ANCIENT LIMITS OF MORAY . . .</p>   |   | <p><i>Facing title-page.</i></p>                            |
|  |   |   |
| <p>✓ PLAN OF ELGIN CATHEDRAL AND PRECINCTS . . .</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>From Drawing by George Sutherland, Esq.</i></p>   |   | <p><i>p. 86</i></p>   |
|  |   |   |
| <p>✓ MORAY AND NAIRN . . .</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>From the Ordnance Survey.</i></p>   | { | <p><i>In pocket at end<br/>             of volume.</i></p>  |



I.

THE PROVINCE OF MORAY

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- ✓ PLAN OF ELGIN CATHEDRAL AND PRECINCTS . . . . . *p. 86*  
*From Drawing by George Sutherland, Esq.*
- ✓ MORAY AND NAIRN . . . . . } *In pocket at end  
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I.

THE PROVINCE OF MORAY







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## THE PROVINCE OF MORAY



## I.

# THE PROVINCE OF MORAY.

THE PROVINCE OF MORAY : ITS BOUNDARIES, DESIGNATION, AND INHABITANTS—PREHISTORIC ANNALS, AND THEIR TEACHING—STONE CIRCLES OF CLAVA—THE PICT OF MORAY : HIS RELIGION AND HIS SOCIAL POLITY—BURGHEAD—THE PICTISH KINGS—THE COLUMBITE CHURCH—THE PICTS AND THE SCOTS—DISAPPEARANCE OF PICTAVIA, AND INDEPENDENCE OF MORAVIA—THE SCANDINAVIANS IN MORAVIA—THE BATTLE OF TORFNESS AND THE DEATH OF DUNCAN—SUENO'S STONE NEAR FORRES—MACBETH—MALCOLM CEANNMOR—THE MAORMORS—MORAVIA UNDER DAVID I.—THANES AND EARLS—THE PARTITION OF THE KINGDOM INTO COUNTIES WIPES OUT THE OLD PROVINCIAL DELIMITATIONS—THE MODERN PROVINCE OF MORAY.

FROM the days when authentic history begins, the province of Moray was one of the great territorial divisions of the country ; and it continued to be so through the long years of the successive kingdoms of the Picts and the Scots, until the country was finally consolidated into feudal Scotland in the early part of the twelfth century.

The province of Moray embraced an area of about 3900 square miles. It was bounded on the east by the river Spey ; on the west by the great dorsal ridge of Drumalban ; on the north by the Dornoch Firth and the river Oykel ; and on the south by the range of mountains known by the name of the Mounth. It thus included the two modern counties of Moray

and Nairn, the whole of the midland district of Inverness-shire, all but the outlying portion of Cromarty, and more than two-thirds of Ross.

The word Moray is an old locative plural of the word *muir*, the sea, and its meaning is therefore "in" or "among the seaboard men." In Gaelic the dative locative is very often raised to the nominative in place-names.

No territory could have a more appropriate designation; for the Moray Firth—the sea here referred to—is the key to its history. To it are due in great measure those exceptional advantages of climate and soil which at various times have attracted Picts, Scots, Norsemen, and Saxons to its shores.

The earliest inhabitants of these parts of whom we have any accurate historical knowledge belonged to the great nation to which the Romans gave the nickname of Picts, or the Painted People, from their habit of dyeing their bodies with woad. The word occurs no earlier than in the writings of the writers of the second century, but it can hardly be doubted that it was in use by the Romans at a much earlier period.

The name by which the Picts designated themselves was *Cruithneach*; and the early chronicles of the race—the compilation, it need hardly be said, of long after-ages—deduce their history from a certain Cruithne, a hero of Scythian or Thracian descent, belonging to a tribe which called itself Agathyrsi, who in the days of the great exodus of the Aryan race landed in Orkney with his seven sons, and from thence overran the whole of the mainland north of the Firths of Forth and Clyde. His children subsequently divided the land into seven provinces, most of which are readily identified, and in one or other of these Moray was certainly included. If any reliance is to be placed on etymology, it possibly formed part of the territory of King Fidach, and the little

stream called the Fiddich, which runs into the Spey near Craigellachie, may yet preserve the memory of its most ancient chief.

That the Picts of Moray belonged to the Gaelic or Gaidelic, and not to the Welsh or British or Brythonic, branch of the Celtic people is also undoubted. When we reach historical times we find them invariably siding with their Celtic brethren. In those early days, when blood was thicker than water, a common origin implied a common policy against all foreign aggression.

What history fails to tell us of the early inhabitants of the district is supplied in some degree by its prehistoric annals. It is impossible, of course, to say to what degree of civilisation they had attained at any particular date. But the unwritten chronicles of tumulus and barrow preserved in local museums, or noticed in the journals of antiquarian societies, prove this at any rate, that their progress in culture and the arts was identical with, and certainly not behind, that of other parts of northern Britain; that Moray had its Stone, Bronze, and Iron ages like the rest; that the proficiency it attained in the arts of agriculture, of spinning and weaving, of forging metals—in short, of peace and war—was equal to that of its neighbours; that, in a word, before the age of history begins, the inhabitants of the province had left barbarism far behind, and had reached a standard of civilisation of which it had no reason to be ashamed.

The general result of the inquiries of scholars may be taken to be this: that the Pict of Moray of the second and third centuries was no mere naked, ignorant savage, but one who had made considerable progress in the culture of the age. In religion he had long ceased to be a polytheist. There was only one stage, and that a short one, between his pantheism and monotheism. He believed in the immortality of the soul.

His priests or magi were a caste by themselves. The "demon-like Druids," to use the oddly complimentary though historically inaccurate expression of one of the earliest Pictish chroniclers, were men of learning and influence.

" Necromancy and idolatry, illusion,  
In a fair and well-walled house,  
Plundering in ships, bright poems,  
By them were taught.

The honouring of sredhs and omens,  
Choice of weather, lucky times,  
The watching the voice of birds,  
They practised without reserve."

The nature of their religion is as yet, and probably will always be, matter of speculation only. But relics of their religious worship, whatever it may have been, are not wanting in Moray. At Viewfield, in the parish of Urquhart, not far from the town of Elgin, is an incontestable stone circle. In Nairnshire these are still more abundant. Examples of them may be found at Moyness, Auldearn, Urchany, Ballinrait, Dalcross, Croy, Daviot, and the upper reaches of the river Nairn. In the valley of the Nairn no less than thirty sites of such circles are known, and the existence of many others is to be inferred from the place-names.

By far the most interesting of these prehistoric remains are the stone circles of Clava. Situated on the south bank of the Nairn, on a piece of uncultivated ground nearly opposite Culloden Moor, they consist of two concentric rings of standing-stones, six to twelve feet high, surrounding a group of cairns, originally seven or eight in number, of which two only now remain sufficiently entire to show the nature of their structure. Those of them which have been opened appear to have been stone-built circular chambers, erected for the

purpose of containing the cinerary urns whose remains were found within them.

As for the stone circles themselves, it is impossible to avoid the conviction that they had a meaning of their own. What that meaning was cannot yet be said to have been accurately ascertained. Their size, their equidistance, their remarkable coincidence with the points of the compass, seem to imply that they were something more than a mere setting to the graves of the mighty dead that lay within them. They may have been, according to the most commonly accepted theory, a sun-dial indicating the hours of the day. But why a mere sun-dial should be placed in such close connection with a burial-ground has as yet to be explained. A more legitimate inference, considering their proximity to these burial-cairns, and keeping in view the veneration with which the Picts regarded their dead, is that they had some religious signification. What that was no one so far has been able to discover. There is less difficulty in arriving at a conclusion as to their antiquity. Cremation was a typical characteristic of purely pagan burial, and, looking to the character of their contents, they probably belong to the Bronze age—the age before iron came into use, and after stone implements had ceased to be exclusively manufactured.

Another relic of prehistoric days, and another also of “the enigmas of archæology,” are the stones with cup-markings found in many parts of the district. According to Mr Romilly Allen, a greater number of these have been discovered in Nairnshire than in any other part of Great Britain. Moot-or doom-hills, too—the “fairy hillocks” of long after-ages—are very common throughout all the district.

The social polity of the Picts seems to have rested on a basis no less enlightened than that of their religious belief.



The scandalous slander that credited the Caledonian Pict with a community of women is now entirely exploded. The Celtic family was in all probability based on the monogamic tie; and in the Celtic family is to be found the germ of all his gentilitian and national peculiarities. The clan system, which in after-ages became the distinguishing characteristic of the Celtic race, was not yet established; but its embryo existed. In the presence of a common danger all the families in a community combined under the leadership of the chief, whose ability to lead constituted his sole claim to supremacy. His weapons, his chariot, his horses, his implements of warfare generally, were the product of skilled and often of highly artistic workmanship. As for his mode of warfare, it was such as our troops had to contend with in the case of the Kaffirs of Cape Colony in 1852, and in that of the Zulus in 1879.

During the Roman occupation of Britain, which began in A.D. 79 and lasted till A.D. 409,—or three hundred and thirty years in all,—the northern Picts, to whom the inhabitants of Moray and Nairn belonged, seem to have been known under different names. Before the time of Severus these various tribes were merged in the general appellation of Caledonii; in Severus's time they were called the Dicalidonæ. But each tribe had also its own separate name. Ptolemy, the Alexandrian geographer, writing in the second century, calls the tribe who occupied the district between the Moray Firth and the Tay the *Οὐκομάγοι* or Vacomagans, and adds that they possessed four towns—Pannatia, Tamia, Pteroton Stratopedon (the Winged Camp), and Tuessis. Pannatia and Tamia have been assigned to such different sites as Inverness and Buchanty on the Almond in the one case, and Braemar and Inchtuthill, an island on the Tay, in the other. Tuessis

is almost universally admitted to have been somewhere on the banks of the Spey, about Fochabers. As for the Winged Camp, though its exact site cannot be said to be established beyond the reach of argument, the general opinion is that if not actually on the shores of the Moray Firth it was not far off them. A strong effort has been made to identify it with Burghead, a little village recently erected into a burgh, about nine miles west of the town of Elgin. Opinions may differ as to whether this effort has been successful or not, but the striking physical features of the locality lend considerable weight to the notion that Burghead was from the earliest times a native Pictish stronghold.

As Burghead is, as we shall see in the sequel, both the most interesting and the most ancient inhabited place along the whole seaboard of the Moray Firth, it may be proper to describe it. The town, which consists of a single street running north and south, is situated on a headland about a third of a mile in length. The abrupt and fractured cliff which terminates it is evidence that at one time this headland extended farther out to sea. Its greatest height is about 80 feet; its breadth at the extremity some 400 feet, but it widens out as it descends into the plain, till its diameter extends to about 1150 feet. This promontory may be said to command the whole of the Moray Firth from the mouth of the Beaulie Firth (the *Æstuarium Vararis*) on the west to the mouth of the Lossie on the east, and the Ord of Caithness on the north. On its western side is a wide circular bay, sufficiently capacious for a mighty fleet. It is a haven safe from the winds of all quarters. In ancient times a belt of forest and peat, now submerged, stretched along its eastern shore. Now a small but weather-proof harbour, erected in 1809 and deepened in 1882-87, is its principal feature.

Nature itself seems to have intended this headland for a fortress. A beacon-fire lit on its summit could have been instantly answered from the hill-tops of what now comprise eight Scottish counties. And what nature intended, man has carried out. The whole crest of the headland was, till the beginning of this century, a piled-up mass of ancient fortifications. In 1793, when General Roy's celebrated work, 'The Military Antiquities of the Romans in North Britain,' was published by the Society of Antiquaries of London, their extent and character were still distinctly manifest, and a plan of them will be found in his book. But when once the demon of improvement has laid its destructive grasp upon a community, nothing, however old, however venerable, is safe from its clutches. About 1818 the proprietors of the land resolved to fill up a small bay where the herring-curing stations now stand. "The whole of the north-west ramparts were hurled down the hill and deposited in the bottom of the bay, the full waggons running down and carrying up the empty ones. No less than a height of 18 feet of ramparts, and the whole upper surface of the high fort, now lie below a line of curing-stations. Its cross ramparts were hurled each into its foss, and are now built over, and the many coins, battle-axes, and spear-heads then found, gone to any English tourist who came that way."<sup>1</sup>

Nothing now remains but a rampart about 400 feet long on the eastern side of the promontory. It is locally known as the "Broch Bailies." But this rampart is of so extraordinary a construction, and has given rise to such different conjectures, that some account of it is necessary. It is about 25 feet high; about 60 feet wide at the base, and about 24 feet at the top. It is composed of alternate layers of logs and

<sup>1</sup> "Notes on the Ramparts of Burghead." By Hugh W. Young. 'Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland,' vol. xxv. p. 445.

stone. The wood is oak, probably from the neighbouring oak-forest of Duffus ; and the logs are joined by cross-pieces, also of oak, riveted together by iron bolts. The stone is freestone, but not the native freestone of the district ; and the foundations are large boulders resting on a beach of rolled pebbles. It is undeniable that this rampart has many points of resemblance with the walls of some of the Gaulish cities which Cæsar found in France.

Upon this fact, and upon the discovery of another very curious relic of antiquity close at hand, and of various objects, resembling Roman manufacture, found among the ruins, it has been maintained that the Romans not only visited Burghead, but established there a military station of something more than a merely temporary character. This theory was first brought prominently forward by General Roy in the work already referred to. In his younger days he had been one of the engineers connected with the survey of Scotland of 1748, and while thus engaged he had been led to the conclusion that the traces of Roman occupation were both more numerous and more widely diffused than was generally supposed. His preconceived ideas were confirmed in a most remarkable manner by the appearance in 1757 of a work entitled '*De Situ Britannæ*,' which the editor, Charles Julius Bertram, attributed to Richard of Cirencester, a Westminster monk of the fourteenth century. This work revolutionised all the previous knowledge of scholars. It maintained that, instead of the Roman occupation of North Britain, even between the walls, being that only of a camp, the Romans had in the reign of Domitian accomplished the entire conquest of Scotland east of the Great Glen, and between the walls of Antonine and the Moray Firth. Out of the territories of the Caledonians a great province had been carved and named *Vespasiana*. Roads had been cut and military stations erected throughout the length

## 12 PTOROTON AND THE PTEROTON STRATOPEDON.

and breadth of this wide tract. The province had even attained the distinction of a capital called Ptoroton, which was situated on the coast somewhere near the mouth of the Varar. As the estuary of the Varar of Ptolemy was either the Beaulieu or the Moray Firth, there was a strong presumption that Ptoroton was no other than Pteroton Stratopedon, the Winged Camp of the Alexandrian astronomer. Presumption gave place to demonstration when remains of an important stronghold and a Roman well or bath were actually found *in situ*.

General Roy was a man of great ability and considerable learning, and with extraordinary powers of induction. It derogates in no way from his well-deserved reputation that his predilection for everything Roman was stronger than his critical faculty. He had been dead nearly sixty years before his assertions were called in question. But in 1852 the first note of suspicion was sounded, and in 1869 the bubble was finally burst. The work of Richard of Cirencester was an audacious forgery. There was no province of Vespasiana; there were no Roman roads consular or vicinal; there was no Ptoroton. None of these existed save in the imagination of their author, Charles Julius Bertram.

This discovery does not necessarily demolish the theory that Burghead may have been a Roman station. For the evidence of its remains is still left. But it places many insuperable obstacles in the way. It shifts the burden of proving that these remains are Roman upon those who assert this; and to this day it can hardly be alleged, with any degree of confidence, that this burden has been discharged.

If it were possible to show by any direct evidence, for example, that the Romans had been at any time in those parts, the difficulty might not be so great. But there is absolutely no evidence. Tacitus, no doubt, states in his 'Agricola'

that in a year fixed by scholars as A.D. 86, the Roman fleet made the periplus of Britain. The Orkneys were discovered, and Thule—probably the mainland of Shetland—was seen. There is no improbability, but very much the reverse, that in this circumnavigation the Romans sailed into the Moray Firth—and sailed out again. The next possible theory is that the district may have been visited by Lollius Urbicus, the imperial lieutenant of the Emperor Antoninus Pius. But Julius Capitolinus, who is our only authority, goes no further than stating that the emperor “even subdued the Britons by Lollius Urbicus, and, driving back the barbarians, built another wall of turf.” Where that barrier was, and who the Britons were that his general chastised, are nowhere specially mentioned. The only other explorer of these northern regions was the Emperor Septimius Severus. We have full accounts of his expedition, which certainly extended beyond the Grampians, in the works of Dion Cassius as abridged by Xiphilin, and of Herodian, in Greek; and in those of Spartian, Eutropius, and others in Latin. The object of the emperor’s expedition was the punishment of the Caledonian or Pictish tribes, whose repeated attacks upon the northern wall had been for long a source of much annoyance to the Roman garrison. The task was more difficult than he expected. His progress was disputed inch by inch. The enemy with whom he had to contend was not only a race of warlike proclivities, but one which had made considerable advance in the art of war. They were inured to fatigue, hunger, and cold. They would run into the morasses up to the neck. They could live for days in their desolate wastes without any other food than roots or leaves. They were armed with bucklers, poniards, and lances with metal balls attached to their lower ends, which they shook to frighten their enemies; and they fought from chariots. It cost the emperor 50,000 men, and it took him three long

years, to force his way "to the extremity of the island," wherever that may have been. The conquest he intended was never achieved. His death at York in 211 put an end to it for good, and his successors never repeated the experiment. Such is the gist of the accounts we have of his expedition. From first to last there is not a word of the establishment of any fortified station in Moray—not even a word of his ever having visited the district.

We shall have occasion later on to consider the character of the antiquities of Burghead, great and small. Meantime it is enough to say that though the legend of the Roman occupation of this remarkable locality is improbable, it is by no means an impossibility.

For four centuries after this we know nothing of Pictish history. But in the seventh century we find the Picts in possession of one of the four kingdoms—and by far the largest—into which Scotland was at that time divided. With the exception of a small territory occupied by the Irish nation of the Scots, known as the kingdom of Dalriada—a territory which may roughly be described as coextensive with the limits of the modern county of Argyll,—the whole of the north of Scotland from Duncansbay Head to the Firth of Forth was in their hands. It was divided by the great mountain-chain of the Mounth between the northern and the southern Picts. It seemed as if the Picts were destined to be the dominant race, and at no distant period to gain possession of the whole of Scotland.

From the earliest times there had always been a strong line of demarcation between the Picts on the north of the Grampians and those on the south. The northern Picts were purely Gaelic in race and language. The southern Picts, though their main body was Gaelic also, were not so purely so. The country between the Firths of Forth and Tay was in the

hands of the tribe of the Damnonii, who belonged to the other branch of the nation; and thus a British interest had been introduced amongst these southern Picts, from which those on the other side of the mountains were entirely free. But both sections prided themselves on their descent from Cruithne, the *eponymus* of their race, and differed only as the families of brothers descended from one parent stock differ from one another. Broken up as they were into tribes and septs, they still acknowledged a common origin and a common interest. And though each tribe (*tuath*), and "great tribe" (*mortuath*), which was a combination of *tuaths*, and province (*coicidh*), which was formed by the union of two or more *mortuaths*, had a *ri* or kinglet of its own, both divisions of the people accepted the necessity of a paramount chief (*ardri*), who exercised authority over the whole nation.

Such was the origin of the kingdom of the Picts. Their kings were elected sometimes from the one, sometimes from the other, branch of the nation. At first the seat of government oscillated between the north and the south of the Mounth, as the northern or the southern Picts had for the moment the ascendancy. But in the end the capital of the kingdom was settled at Scone, and here their kings were crowned sitting on the block of red sandstone which now supports the Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey.

The Pictish Chronicle contains a list of the Pictish kings from "Cruidne, filius Cinge," the "father of the Picts inhabiting this island, who reigned a hundred years," to Brude or Bred, the last of the line, who reigned one year only. The monarchy extends from mythic times till the year 844, when Kenneth MacAlpin conquered Pictavia, and constituted the Scots—the race to which he belonged—the predominant factor in the history of the country.

Although it is impossible to take this list seriously, so far



at least as it relates to the earlier kings, it has always been regarded as sufficiently authentic to deduce certain inferences from it, which, confirmed by statements in other ancient records, show that a very peculiar law of succession prevailed amongst these Pictish kings. The right of sovereignty lay in the females of the original royal blood, and not in the males. This rule was no doubt adopted to counteract the laxity of morals which prevailed amongst the males. Even if the mother had married into another tribe, she could transmit to her children a portion of the blood of the original ancestor of the line. The tribe, whether of the northern or the southern Picts, who thus secured the eldest female descendant of Cruithne, the first king of the nation, secured also the sovereignty of the whole. His children were adopted into their mother's tribe, and the old family names of Brude, Drust, Nechtan, Talorgan, and Gartnaidh, bestowed upon them, were at once the evidence and the guarantee of their royal descent.

It is not till we reach the sixth century that we find ourselves on firm historical ground with regard to those ancient kings. When this is actually the case, we are brought face to face with another very interesting subject of inquiry—the introduction of Christianity into northern Scotland. Between the years 556 and 586, Brude, son of Mailcu (Malcolm), who belonged to the northern branch of the nation, was king of the Picts. He was a very brave and powerful prince, who had successfully repulsed the attacks upon his kingdom of the Scots of Dalriada, slain their king Gabhran, and attached certain insular portions of their territory to his own dominions. He had his fort and palace at the eastern end of Loch Ness—probably on the summit of Craig Phadrick,—and there he lived surrounded by his warriors and fortified in his paganism by a crowd of attendant Magi.

He was at the very height of his glory when, in the ninth year of his reign (A.D. 565), he received a visit from Columba. The defeat of the Scots, who were nominally at least a Christian people, had drawn the saint's attention to Pictavia; and in 563 he crossed over from Ireland, determined to effect the conversion of its inhabitants, and to obtain, if possible, some concessions in favour of a conquered race, to which he himself belonged. It took him two years, however, to reach the Pictish king's stronghold.

When at last he did so, it was to receive a most inhospitable reception. The doors of the fortress were shut in his face. But when the saint signed them with the sign of the cross, they immediately flew open of their own accord. Filled with alarm, the king and his councillors advanced to meet Columba and his companions, and addressed them in conciliatory and respectful language. "And ever after, so long as he lived, the king held this holy and reverend man in very great honour, as was his due."

But the king's conversion was not effected without difficulty. Columba had to overcome the determined opposition of his Magi. So virulent was their resistance that he had to invoke the aid of miracles. In the end the question resolved itself into a struggle for pre-eminence in supernatural power. It was the story of Moses and the priests of Pharaoh over again. It ended, of course, in the saint's decisive victory. It was difficult to resist a man who could raise a child from the dead, who could make a stone from the river float on its surface like an apple, who could overcome a storm and a darkness interposed to prevent his departure, and could even force Broichan, the chief of them all, to liberate a little Scottic female slave with whom he "cruelly and obstinately" refused to part. The king's conversion was followed, nominally at least, by Christianity being declared the State religion.

## 18 INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO MORAY.

But many long years were to ensue before it was anything but a name in the kingdom of the northern Picts.

In time, however, the seed sown by Columba began to germinate. Churches were erected, religious foundations endowed; the rites of paganism fell into desuetude, and a healthy Christian spirit was engendered among the people. The evidence of this is to be found in the dedications and place-names which still exist in the locality. No one, however, can say how long the process took, or who were the agents by whom it was effected.

Very little of it, if any, was the work of the saint himself. When he left King Brude's palace he probably proceeded eastward to Buchan by sea. At least this is the inference to be deduced from Adamnan's story of Broichan's invoking a storm of fog and darkness to impede his departure. But, not very long after, a little Christian colony was planted a couple of miles east of Burghead on a plot of particularly fertile ground, which still goes by the name of the College of Roseisle; and at much the same time a church was erected at Burghead itself. Two miles yet farther east, at a place called Unthank, was another small settlement of holy brethren. At any rate, at both of these, ecclesiastical buildings of very early date are known to have existed.

One is almost inclined to think that it was intended to make Burghead the seat of the new religion within the province. There was already a Pictish stronghold here to protect the church which was actually established in its midst. And there was perhaps another, though a less practical, reason. Adamnan, in his *Life of Columba*, tells of a miraculous dream which happened to his mother Eithne shortly before the birth of the saint. An angel appeared to her, bringing her a certain robe of extraordinary beauty. After a short time he demanded it back, and having raised and spread

it, he let it fly through the air. It was lost to her for ever. But as it sped away she could see it widening and widening, till it overshadowed mountains and plains and forests. The angel comforted her for its loss by assuring her that her son was destined to encompass a countless number of souls within his garment and bring them home to God. An Irish memoir of St Columba, supposed to be as old as the tenth century, still further amplifies the legend. The garment was splendid beyond all the colours of this world, and it seemed to "reach from Innsi-mod to Caer-nam-brocc." Innsi-mod is Inishymoe, a place on one of the islands in Clew Bay, on the west coast of Ireland. As for Caer-nam-brocc, both Dr Reeves, Bishop of Down, the editor of Adamnan's Life, and Dr W. F. Skene, the author of 'Celtic Scotland,' identify it with Burghead. Be this as it may, there is every reason to believe that the church of Burghead was an ecclesiastical foundation of the highest importance. The number of fragments of stone crosses found about and around it—fragments to which the best authorities are now almost unanimous in assigning a post-pagan origin—go far to prove this.

Still stronger evidence, however, is to be found in the existence, a short distance to the eastward of its site, of a very curious structure which locally goes by the name of the Roman Bath or Well, but which the same authorities believe to have been a baptistery. It may at once be admitted that it bears a considerable resemblance to an old Roman bath, such as have been found at Chester, at London, on Hadrian's Wall, and at Dijon in France. As, however, no Roman occupation of the locality can be held to have been satisfactorily established, while no one disputes the existence of a very early Christian church, the probabilities seem to lean towards its Christian origin.

It is a cistern or reservoir hollowed out of the solid rock.

Its four sides are very nearly about the same dimensions, or between 10 and 11 feet. The depth of the basin is 4 feet 4 inches, and the height of the chamber, from the ledge upwards, between 11 and 12 feet. Two steps lead down into the basin. Even without its present arched roof, which was erected in 1810, it reminds one, in its gloom, its silence, and its construction, of nothing so much as a tomb. And when we consider that the rite of immersion was held in the early days of Christianity to be typical of dying to the world, and that baptisteries were usually constructed so as to resemble the tomb of our Lord, with whom, in the words of St Paul, "we are buried by baptism," a strong presumption arises in favour of this having been its purpose. It in no way militates from this theory that it does not actually adjoin the site of the church. The baptism of adults, which never took place except at the festivals of Easter, Pentecost, and Epiphany, was always by immersion, and necessitated the existence of either a river, a pool, or a spring. On the promontory on which the church was situated there is none of these. The nearest place where living water could be obtained was the spring, now covered by this cistern; and, after all, it was only a few hundred yards off.

It would be absurd to attempt to assign any date to this remarkable structure, or to the stone crosses which have been exhumed in the locality. The age of stone crosses is from the eighth to the eleventh centuries. During that lengthened period Celtic workmen had assuredly reached a standard of excellence sufficiently high to equal the work of the Roman soldiers even of the third century.

As if to add still further to our perplexities, there were discovered, in the course of the improvements which took place upon Burghead and its harbour between the years 1805

and 1809, certain boulder slabs, each incised with the figure of a bull, of a kind entirely new to Scottish archæology. Fragments of six of these early sculptures are in existence. But if a statement of the late Mr Robert Carruthers in his 'Highland Note-Book' may be relied on, no fewer than thirty have been found in all. Those which remain agree in this, that the stones on which they are cut are flat, water-worn, sandstone boulders, picked up, it would seem, on the adjoining shore; and that they are of small size, varying in length from 27 to 30 inches, and in thickness from 3 to 6 inches.

In order to adapt them to the theory of Roman occupation, which was the one exclusively in vogue in the first half of the present century, it was suggested that they "were trophies carved by the Romans, as we strike medals in commemoration of any signal victory." This theory, though it received the sanction of the Society of Antiquaries of London, was soon seen to be untenable. And of late another has been brought forward by the eminent archæologist Dr James Macdonald, which, though not yet of universal adoption, is in many respects more reasonable than the other.

According to this authority these incised slabs were commuted votive or piacular sacrifices, such as were practised in all parts of Britain within Christian times. They are true "substitutory offerings made in grateful commemoration of a benefit received, rather than as an atonement of sin,"<sup>1</sup> similar to the *ex votos* common to this day in Roman Catholic countries.

A curious superstition, prevalent till within the most recent

<sup>1</sup> "Burghead as the Site of an early Christian Church." By James Macdonald, LL.D. 'Proceedings of the Glasgow Archæological Society,' vol. ii., N.S., 1891.

years amongst the fisher people of the Moray Firth, may still preserve the sentiment embodied in this suggestion—the feeling that a sacrifice, or its symbol, was due either to a protecting saint or to Divinity itself for escape from some threatened danger, or for preservation from the ordinary perils of this mortal life. No fisherman of any of the fishing villages along the coast would ever venture to sea at the beginning of a New Year until blood had been shed. Amongst old-fashioned people a sheep was often killed for the purpose. In later and more degenerate days the person who first drew blood in a quarrel with a neighbour was believed to have discharged the obligation, and secured for himself good luck in the fishing for all the subsequent year.

Though Burghead was probably, as we have suggested, not only the first but the most important seat of the early Christian Church within the province, it was far from being the only one. It might seem strange, if we did not know the jealousy with which his memory was regarded in after-ages by the Roman Catholic Church, that Columba, to whom Moray owed its Christianity, should not have been adopted as the patron saint of the province. But this he never became. Three places only within it, so far as we know, have specially venerated his name. At Petty and Kingussie in Inverness-shire there are two undoubted dedications to him, though it is impossible now to say whether they were the foundations of the saint himself or of his disciples. And the little village of Auldearn, near Nairn, till the year 1880 perpetuated his name in the annual “ploy” that went by the name of St Colm’s Market.

The only other traces of the Columbite Church within the district are certain place-names in Nairnshire believed by local antiquaries to be referable to St Evan or St Ewan, a corruption of St Adamnan, “Little Adam”—Columba’s biographer,

and one of his successors in the abbacy of the monastery of Iona—to whom also the church of Cawdor was dedicated ; two old Celtic church bells—one at Inch, near Kingussie, the other at Cawdor—which bear his name ; and a spring at Burg-head called St Aethan's Well, which is supposed to be a corruption of St Aedan or Aidan, a monk of Iona, and afterwards first bishop of Lindisfarne, another of Columba's disciples.

From this time till the expulsion of the Columbite clergy from the territories of the northern Picts by King Nectan in 717, we know nothing further of the Columbite Church.

About three years before St Columba's mission to King Brude, as we have seen, hostilities had broken out between the Picts and their neighbours the Scots. These "Irish vagabonds" (*Hiberni grassatores*), as Gildas calls them, first make their appearance in history in the year 360 as one of the barbaric assailants of the Roman province in Britain. They were then in alliance with the Picts. But an alliance between two tribes both bent upon the same design—the possession of the land—was not likely to be of long continuance ; and in the days of King Brude they finally came to blows. The Pictish king was successful. He drove his enemies across Drumalban and confined them within Dalriada, where by this time they had established a kingdom of their own. The Scots, however, were irrepressible, and for the next two hundred years the hostilities between the two races were unceasing.

On the whole, the Picts were most frequently victorious. Indeed for a whole century—between 741 and 841—they actually ruled over Dalriada, and seemed to be in a fair way of becoming the future kings of Alban itself. But in 839 Fortune declared against them. Kenneth MacAlpin, a Scot by race, though of Pictish descent on the mother's side,



invaded Pictavia and defeated the Picts with great slaughter. Five years later we find him in undisputed possession of both Dalriada and Pictavia. And within fifty years after this the name of Pictavia disappears from history, and in its place we have the independent principality of Moravia and the kingdom of Alban.

The tract of country embraced within these two states consisted of the whole midland and north-eastern districts of Scotland east of Drumalban and between the Firths of Dornoch and of Forth. The boundary between them was a line drawn a little to the eastward of the course of the river Spey, and descending in a south-easterly direction to Lochaber. In short, the old limits of Moravia remained unchanged till towards the end of the tenth century, when the Norsemen succeeded in substituting the Moray for the Dornoch Firth as its northern boundary.

The exact date when Moravia became an independent principality cannot be given. Still less can we be sure to which of its Maormors it owed its freedom. But the family which raised it to the highest pitch of glory was that to which Macbeth belonged, and whose most distinguished member was Ruadri, son of Morgan, who claimed to be a descendant of Angus, one of the seven sons of Cruithne. This family, according to the Irish Annals, is first heard of in history somewhere about the end of the tenth or the beginning of the eleventh century. Nor does it finally fade into oblivion till the reign of David I. The Scottic kingdom of Alban lasted for about a hundred and sixty years, or from 844 to somewhere about 1004, when the name became merged in that of Scotia during the reign of Malcolm MacKenneth. During the whole of this period its kings were of the race of its founder, Kenneth MacAlpin, and, with a brief exception, alternated between the descendants of his two sons, Constantin and Aedh.

With this preliminary explanation we may now resume the narrative.

It would be a mistake to suppose that the final success of the Scots was due entirely to their unaided superior manhood. Kenneth MacAlpin's victory was brought about in great measure from his alliance with a race which for some time past had been menacing the western coasts of Scotland, and in the days of his father Alpin had already inflicted a crushing defeat on the unfortunate Picts. This was the people whom our earlier historical writers insisted on calling by the generic term of Danes, but whom we, with fuller knowledge, now separate into their proper divisions of Danes and Norwegians, or Norsemen. These Scandinavian invaders were now acting the part towards the Scots which the Scots themselves had in earlier ages assumed towards the Picts. For the moment they were their allies. Later on they were destined to be their most formidable foes.

The story of the Norsemen in Scotland has not yet been written. When it is, it will be found that the chapter which deals with Moravia is not the least interesting portion of the narrative. But the facts are few, the presumptions we are compelled to make are many. And even these are based in too many instances on no higher evidence than the misleading testimony of place-names, and the existence of certain customs and superstitions, which we may assert but cannot always prove to be of Scandinavian origin.

The Scandinavian invaders of Scotland of the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries belonged to two distinct nations, and were known to the earlier annalists by two distinct names. The one was the Finngaill, the white or fair-haired Galls (or strangers). The other was the Dubhgaill, the black or dark-haired Galls. The former were Norwegians, the latter were Danes. Another name for the Norsemen was Lochlan-

nach, the people of Lochlann—the Lochlin of Ossian's poems. The Scandinavian assailants of Moravia belonged, so far as we know, exclusively to the first of these races. They came at first as Vikings—in other words, merely to harry. Not until the very end of the ninth century can we trace any disposition on their part to colonise the districts which every year, or nearly every year, they visited with their hostile fleets of dragon-ships, cutters, and shells.<sup>1</sup> The name of Viking—the man of the *vik* or bay—is derived from the great Wick, the bulge-shaped indentation at the foot of the Scandinavian peninsula, washed by the waters of the Skaggerack and Cattegat, from whence, according to tradition, the first of his kind emerged. Whether that was its original habitat or not, Vikingism, like other bad practices, spread like a conflagration. It became a regular pursuit even amongst the highest in the land. As soon as a lad of noble birth had attained the age of manhood—and Norsemen became of age as soon as they could wield a sword or hurl a spear—he was given a ship and sent on a viking cruise to gain wealth and to see the world. It was what the “grand tour” was in the days of our grandfathers, with this difference, that in the one case parents sent their sons abroad to win money, and in the other to spend it. And at the period at which we have now arrived all Scandinavia, wheresoever situated,—Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Pomerania, the Shetland, Orkney, and Western Islands—Iceland alone excepted,—sent out swarms of plunderers, who, if they did not always adopt the name,

<sup>1</sup> The dragon-ships (*drakes*), so called from the head and tail of a dragon that they bore at prow and stern, were warships, and had often as many as seventy benches of rowers, of four rowers to each bench. The cutters (*karves*) bore the heads of wolves and had never more than fifteen benches. The shells (*sneekas*) were used merely as transport for their war-horses. Readers of Ossian will remember the expression “King of Shells,” so often applied to the heroes of Lochlin.

had adopted the practice, and were feared for their courage, their cruelty, and their rapacity, as their ancestors were said to have feared their fabled opponents—the giants and other monstrous beings of old.

It would be ludicrous, if it were not pitiful, to read the descriptions given by contemporary annalists of these formidable invaders. Their fears transformed them into a demon host of whose coming heaven itself did not disdain to warn them. Horrible lightnings, dragons in the air, flashes of fire glancing to and fro, heralded their advent. Like clouds of stinging hornets, their swift galleys glided into bay and creek. Like hordes of fierce and angry wolves, their warriors, clad in suits of glistening mail, with crested helmets on their heads and double-edged swords three feet long in their hands, overran the country in all directions, “plundering, tearing, and killing not only sheep and oxen, but priests and Levites, and choirs of monks and nuns.” Woe to the enemy who fell into their pitiless hands! His conqueror would carve “the blood-eagle” on his back, hewing his ribs from his backbone, and casting his warm heart and lungs to the winds. Or, dashing out his brains with a stone, he would offer him as a sacrifice to Thor, the God of War. Or, hastily strangled, he would fling him on the funeral pyre of some brother warrior. Or, mutilated and blinded, he would leave him to drag out a miserable existence as a coward and a *nothing*.

With the Norseman it was different. Death, which through the teachings of Christianity his victim had now learned to fear, had no terrors for him. On the contrary, he courted it. For with him it was not “after death the judgment,” but “after death the guerdon.” Life might be a painful fight, but eternity was a painless one. All day long in Valhalla the warriors might struggle and combat. But every evening their wounds were healed, and they awoke each

morning to renew with redoubled zest the martial exercises of the previous day. For with the Norseman to fight and to live were synonymous terms.

Their first appearance on the Scottish coasts is supposed to have been in the year 798, when they harried the Hebrides. In 802, and again in 806, they ravaged Iona, slaying on the latter occasion sixty-eight of the monastic family there. In the following year they settled on the mainland of Ireland. A short time later two Norse kingdoms—the one with Armagh, the other with Dublin, for its capital—were established there; and it was from the latter of these that the great wave of Norse supremacy which began to sweep over Moray so early as the end of the ninth century appears to have come.

So far as we know, the earliest occasion when the Norsemen did a little harrying in Pictland on their own account was in 871, when Olaf the White, King of Dublin, attacked the southern part of Pictavia, and carried “a great prey of Picts and Angles and Britons into captivity in Ireland.” But it was Olaf’s son, Thorstein the Red, who first conquered Moravia. An expedition undertaken by him in the year 874 resulted in his possessing himself of the whole territories of the northern Picts. He retained them, however, only for one whole year. The following year, the Annals of Ulster tell us, he was treacherously slain by the men of Alban. Until Skene pointed it out, this expedition of Thorstein’s was generally believed to have been undertaken in concert with Sigurd, first jarl of Orkney and Caithness, brother of the celebrated Rögnvald, Jarl of Moeri, Harold the Fair-haired’s friend and counsellor, and consequently the uncle of a still more famous Norseman, Hrölf, the conqueror of Normandy, to whom we owe our Norman kings. But Sigurd’s invasion of Moray was certainly at least ten

years later. It is, however, impossible to give the actual date.

In the Icelandic 'Flateyrbok,' after stating that Sigurd made an alliance with Thorstein, which we have seen is a mistake, the Saga-writer goes on to say that Sigurd, now become a great chief, "conquered all Caithness, and much more of Scotland—Maerhaefui [Moray] and Ross—and built a borg on the southern borders of Maerhaefui."

This "borg" is believed by the best authorities to have been erected on the promontory which the writer of the Orkneyinga Saga so often refers to under the name of Torfness, "on the south side of Baeford." And though by some Torfness is identified with Tarbetness, the more general opinion is that it is no other than the sandy spit on which now stands the town of Burghead, already so frequently mentioned. That a broad belt of *torf* or peat once existed on the western side of its wide semicircular bay, is clearly proved from the character of its submerged remains; and the fact that no other is to be found on what to the Norseman, at least, was "the southern boundary of Moray," lends considerable colour to the supposition that Torfness and Burghead are identical.<sup>1</sup> Still more conclusive, perhaps, is the circumstance that Burghead is to this day locally known by the name of the "Broch." And though the proof falls short of demonstration, it can hardly be reasonably doubted that this most interesting locality was the headquarters of the Norsemen during their early attempt to establish a foothold in Moray.

<sup>1</sup> It was to Torfness that Einar, the nephew and successor of Sigurd Egstein, first jarl of Orkney and Caithness, who introduced the use of peat as fuel among the Orcadians, and thus earned the name of Torf-Einar, sent for a supply of fuel during a period of great scarcity in the Orkneys. Einar was very probably first made aware of its usefulness by his uncle Sigurd, who may himself have learned it when living at Burghead.

How long Sigurd reigned in Moray is uncertain. But his rule cannot have been long, and it certainly was not peaceful. The Moray Maormors were not men of a character to bear without impatience a rider on their back. In the end they succeeded in throwing him off. The holder of the dignity for the time was Maelbrigd, son of Ruadri or Rory, whose possible claim to have been the founder of the independent principality of Moray has been already referred to. According to the Scandinavian Sagas, he was surnamed the Tooth, from a protruding buck-tooth, which certainly did not detract from the ferocity of his visage. This Maelbrigd was destined to be the Norsemen's bane. One day he and Sigurd arranged to meet at a certain place, with forty men on horseback apiece, to settle some differences between them. Sigurd had no very high opinion, however, of his adversary's good faith. Accordingly, he directed that two of his men should bestride each horse. As soon as they came in sight Maelbrigd's quick eye detected the deception. He pointed it out to his followers. "There is no help for it," he said. "Sigurd has dealt treacherously with us. But let us each kill our man before we die." Then they made themselves ready. The jarl saw what they were about. Bidding his men dismount, he divided them into two bodies. The one he ordered to advance and break their battle; the other he bade go round and attack them from behind. "There was hard fighting immediately, and it was not long before Maelbrigd fell and all his men with him."

The Norsemen were as elated as if they had won an honest victory. Cutting off the heads of their foes, each man hung one to his saddle-straps. To Sigurd was allotted that of Maelbrigd. And with these ghastly trophies dangling by their horses' sides they galloped home in highest glee. But on the way Sigurd, meaning to give his horse a kick to

quicken its pace, brought the calf of his leg in contact with Maelbrigd's projecting tooth. It scratched him slightly. On, however, he rode, thinking nothing of the accident. As he proceeded home he began to feel his leg getting painful. Soon it commenced to swell. Ultimately it mortified. Before many days were over he was dead. And he was "howelaid" at a place called Ekkialsbakki.

A fierce fight has ensued amongst archæologists as to the site of Ekkialsbakki. While Worsaae and Dr Anderson think that it was situated on the banks of the river Oykel, which formed the northern boundary of the province of Moray, Skene places it on the river Findhorn, and even suggests that the sculptured pillar near Forres known by the name of Sueno's Stone may have been intended to mark the grave of the Norse jarl. The first of these theories seems the more correct.

After this comes another great void in Moravian history. When next we can make sure of the records, another Sigurd, surnamed the Stout, is the Jarl of Caithness and Orkney. His relations with the Moray men are not a whit more amicable than were those of his predecessors. We find him marching forth to battle against Finleikr or Finlay, who had succeeded his brother Maelbrigd in the maormorship of the district. The battle took place at Skitten, about five miles north-west of Wick, and was long and fierce. Finleikr's troops outnumbered those of Sigurd in the proportion of seven to one. But Sigurd had an ally more powerful than a host. This was a magic banner, bearing the device of an ink-black raven soaring on the wings of the wind. It was the gift of his mother, a sorceress of transcendent skill. She and her maidens had spent many weary hours over its fashioning, and it was woven about with spells and enchantments. The man who carried it in battle would die, but so long as the



standard waved aloft the Norwegians would be victorious. And so, of course, it came about. Then occurred the inevitable reprisals. Sigurd followed up his victory by overrunning the province north of the Firth. In 989 we find him in possession of Moray, Ross, and Sutherland, and a portion of Dalmriada on the other side of Drumalban. The effect of this victory was to establish the Moray Firth as the northern boundary of Moray for all time coming.

The next noteworthy incident in Sigurd's history is the resistance he made some years later to the attempt of Malcolm MacKenneth (1005-1034), King of Scotia (as the kingdom of Alban with the addition of the Lothians had now come to be called), to wrest his hardly acquired dominions from his grasp. The attempt was unsuccessful. Malcolm found it more to his advantage to enter into an alliance with Sigurd than to fight him. He conferred the earldom of Caithness upon him, and he gave him his daughter in marriage. A few years later—in 1014—Sigurd was killed at the battle of Clontarff (Cluantarbh) in Ireland.

Besides the daughter whom he married to the redoubtable Scandinavian jarl, Malcolm had another, named Bethock or Beatrice, who at an early age became the wife of Crinan, lay abbot of Dunkeld. Each of these daughters had a son to their respective husbands. The son of Sigurd was named Thorfinn; the son of Crinan was named Duncan. The emulation between these two cousins was destined to embroil all the north of Scotland, and to create complications which lasted for nearly half a century.

Sigurd died when his son Thorfinn was only five years old, but his grandfather Malcolm, with whom the boy was a great favourite, at once took steps to provide for him. He conferred on him the districts of Caithness and Sutherland with the title of earl. Fifteen years later, when the last of his

brothers of the first family died,—for Sigurd was a widower when he married King Malcolm's daughter,—he succeeded to the jarldom of Orkney and Shetland. From that time forward he owed a divided allegiance—to Scotland for his earldom, to Norway for his jarldom. As for his cousin Duncan, he seems to have been a youth whose ambition was ever greater than his judgment. He had hardly succeeded to his grandfather's throne than we find him in hostilities with Thorfinn. His cousin's succession to the Scandinavian jarldom, which had occurred a few years before his own succession to the Scottish throne, seemed to have raised doubts in his mind whether an allegiance divided between two monarchies could possibly be loyal to either. To put an end to this state of uncertainty he determined either to recover possession by force of arms of the earldom of Caithness and Sutherland or to make Thorfinn pay tribute for it. The struggle lasted for a considerable period. The Norsemen were, as a rule, successful; and in the end they gained a decisive victory.

The scene of this momentous fight was Torfness—in other words, Burghead; and the date is the 14th August 1040. It is the only battle of real consequence that ever took place in Morayshire. The army of the Scots far outnumbered that of their antagonists. It consisted of levies drawn from every part of the kingdom, from west and east and south, even from the distant and unknown region of Cantire, and it included amongst other provincial troops the men of Moray under Macbeth, son of Finlay, now become their maormor, and one of the most distinguished generals of the Scottish king. It was supported also by a large body of Irish auxiliaries. This formidable host was led by King Duncan in person. As for its opponents, the *Saga* gives us a striking picture of their leader Thorfinn—a huge, sinewy, uncomely, martial-looking man, sharp-featured,

dark-haired, sallow, and of swarthy complexion, with a gold-plated helmet on his head, a sword at his belt, and a spear in his hands ; but it tells us little more about them. We need not linger over the details of the battle. For us they are of little interest. "The fight ended," says the Saga-writer, "with the flight of the king, and some say he was slain."

Slain undoubtedly Duncan was. We have it on the authority of Marianus Scotus, of Tighernac, and of all the later chroniclers. And his general, Macbeth, was his murderer. Local tradition has it that Bothgauenan,<sup>1</sup> the place where the older chroniclers tell us he was killed, is Pitgaveny, at the head of the once wide and beautiful Loch of Spynie, about a couple of miles north-east from Elgin ; and that the tragedy occurred as the king was resting after his nine miles' ride from the battlefield. It is not unlikely to be true. Tradition, however, cannot help us to settle the mystery of the crime. Skene's suggestion that Macbeth had possibly some claims upon the Scottish throne through his wife Gruach, daughter of Boede, the descendant of an elder branch of Duncan's family, and that these claims were in the eyes of many preferable to those of King Duncan, is exceedingly probable. If so, the slaying of King Duncan may not have been, in the estimation of those days, murder ; but it is difficult, notwithstanding, to regard it as anything less than treason.

The mystery that enshrouds the whole affair is deepened by the result. Macbeth becomes King of Scotland, and from that date the Norsemen cease from troubling. Thorfinn joins forces with Macbeth, and accompanies him south on his victorious march as far as Fife. How this extraordinary state of affairs was brought about we can but conjecture.

<sup>1</sup> Bothgauenan (Bothgowan) and Pitgaveny are believed to be only different forms of the same word, which means the smith's bothy.

What alone is certain is, that an agreement of some sort was entered into between them ; and that from this date no further hostilities took place between the native princes and the Scandinavians. But, before leaving the Norse period of Moravian history, something remains to be said concerning the character and extent of the earlier Viking occupation, or attempted occupation, of the southern seaboard of the Moray Firth.

There is no reason to believe that it was at any time acquiesced in by the inhabitants. At the best it was always precarious. Brushes, more or less serious, between the invaders and the natives were frequent. Of this we can have but little doubt. That these reached the importance of a pitched battle is, however, a different matter. The great struggle at Kinloss in the reign of Malcolm II., when "the Danes" took the castles of Elgin and Nairn and put their garrisons to the sword, which is to this day a fondly cherished belief in certain quarters, rests on no higher authority than that of Hector Boece, whose information is based on the fabulous Veremund or John Campbell. The whole story is a fiction from beginning to end. The absurd local tradition that the town of Elgin was founded by Helgi, son of the celebrated "Burnt Njal," and one of Jarl Sigurd Hlödverson's warriors, and that it still bears his name, is quite as worthy of credence.

Close to the town of Forres stands a very remarkable sculptured pillar which goes by the name of Sueno's Stone. There is nothing approaching it, either in style or in execution, in any other part of the province. If not the finest, it is almost the finest, in Scotland. Its workmanship is Celtic, and of the highest type of Celtic art. It has a story to tell, and seems to tell it very clearly. There are men standing arrayed in line of battle, with swords in their hands ; there is an army apparently on the march ; there is a battle ; there

is a victory; there are slaughtered men and fettered captives; there are veiled and hooded figures that look like priests praying, and above them is a gigantic cross. Most people would say that it was a record of fierce fight and glorious victory. Yet no one so far has been able to connect it with certainty with any local event for which we have the voucher of history. It stands there, by the side of a commonplace nineteenth-century field—brown in spring and green in summer,—gaunt, solitary, frowning—an object of mystery to this age, and in all probability to future ages.

Theories about it, of course, are abundant. Worsaae, for instance, would have us believe that it was erected to commemorate the treaty of peace concluded between the Danish king Svend Tveskjaeg and King Malcolm II., and “the expulsion of the Danes from the coasts of Moray”; and this interpretation, though it bears its own refutation on the face of it, has been repeated by most of the local writers who have noticed it. Others, with a show of greater probability, think that it records some incident in the career of Swein Asleifson, the last and greatest of the Orkney Vikings, who was certainly in Moray in the reign of Donald, King of Alban (889-900). Skene, as we have seen, is of opinion that it has nothing to do with any one of the name of Sueno at all, seeing that this name “is no older than Hector Boece,” and that it may refer to the great battle at Ekkialsbakki between Sigurd and Maelbrigd, though to give plausibility to this conjecture he is compelled to read it from bottom to top. Others, adopting an entirely different view, maintain that its meaning is purely mystic. It is a relic of the early Christian Church, and is intended to represent the battle of life and the triumph of good over evil.

We must leave each of these classes of theorists to make good its own position. We would only add that, if it has any

historical significance at all, it is, considering its Celtic origin, more likely to have been intended as a record of the men of Moray over the Norsemen than of the Scandinavians over the Celts.

But the fertile Laigh of Moray was unquestionably more than a mere battlefield to the Norsemen. They had certainly settlements within its borders, and beyond them too. For in Nairnshire the traces of their existence are both more numerous and more certain than in the sister county. If the borg at Torfness was, as is very probable, the Norsemen's principal stronghold, their other settlements must all have been in its immediate neighbourhood, or sufficiently near to be able to rely on the protection which it afforded. And this appears to have been the case. The Orkneyinga Saga speaks of "a trading-place in Scotland in the days of Swein Asleifson" which it calls Dufeyrar, which was certainly in the immediate vicinity. For Dufeyrar means the *cyri* or sandy spit of Duffus, which is the parish within which Burghead is situated. As for the others, they seem to have been farther westward. The little fishing village of Mavistoun, between Forres and Nairn, now extinct, is said to have once been known as Maestoun, which in Norse would mean the "town of the maidens."

Nairn was certainly a Scandinavian settlement. The names of the people in the fisher-town there are still almost exclusively Norse. Main, Manson, and Ralph are undoubtedly Magnus, Magnusson, and Hrölf. As a rule, however, local surnames and place-names aid us little in our inquiry. They are remarkably few in number. But this need not surprise us. Moray was a settled district before the Norsemen made its acquaintance, and its various localities had already names of their own. One thing, however, is especially noticeable, and that is, that on the whole seaboard of the two counties

of Elgin and Nairn there is absolutely not a single place-name ending in *thorpe* or *by*, the two unmistakable terminals of Danish origin. The inference is obvious. It was the Norwegians, not the Danes, who had designs upon the possession of the district.

Macbeth's reign as King of Scotland lasted from 1014 to 1057. He had a difficult game to play, but he played it like a man. The Irish and Pictish additions to the 'Historia Britonum' speak of him as "the vigorous Macbrethack." The 'Duan Albanach' calls him "Macbeathadh the renowned." In another old chronicle he is described as "*felicis memoriae*."

But Macbeth, in the opinion of many, was a usurper, if not something worse, and he had to take a usurper's risk. Hence we find that he was never strong enough to stand alone. Without the aid of his ally Thorfinn he would never have maintained his position, and Thorfinn's assistance was only purchased by the cession to him of a large portion of territory on the east coast, extending as far south as Fife, or at any rate as the Firth of Tay. Even with this help he must have had an anxious time of it. Shakespeare's picture of him, tortured with apprehension and remorse, may not be so fictitious after all. For we find him in 1050, if not making a pilgrimage to Rome in person, at any rate distributing prodigal largesse among the poor of the imperial city. Great men in those days did not take such journeys or send such contributions except to obtain absolution for sins of so scarlet a dye that they could not be washed away by the ordinary means of cleansing at their command.

He returned to Scotland only to find himself plunged into a sea of troubles stormier than he had left. His absence had made his enemies bolder. Not content with plotting, they now meditated action. Siward, Earl of Northumberland, whose sister, or cousin, the murdered Duncan had married,

was in arms to defend the rights of Duncan's young son Malcolm. His first effort on behalf of his kinsman ended by his driving Macbeth from the English part of his possessions. There was a great battle at Scone. If the prophecy of St Berchan is to be credited, it seems to have been a night attack :—

“ On the middle of Scone it will vomit blood,  
The evening of a night in much contention.”

The men of Alban loyally supported their king *de facto*; so did his Norwegian allies. There was a tremendous slaughter. Thorfinn's son was killed, so was Earl Siward's, as also was his nephew. But whichever side gained the victory, the campaign ended by Malcolm being placed in possession of Cumbria.

This, however, was but the beginning of troubles. Next year Earl Siward died. Malcolm, whose ambition had by this time been whetted by his previous success, resolved to make a further effort to regain his father's kingdom. In 1057 he was in a position to carry out his designs. He invaded Scotland, chased Macbeth across the Mounth, and finally slew him in battle at Lumphanan in Mar on 15th August 1057.

This did not, however, end the struggle. Macbeth's friends immediately proclaimed Lulach, son of Gillacomgan, his successor. There are various opinions as to his relationship to Macbeth, but he seems to have been his cousin. Whatever may have been the connection, he inherited nothing of his predecessor's character. The poor half-witted creature was as little fitted to hold the reins of government as Richard Cromwell. He was slain at Eassie, in Strathbogie, seven months afterwards; and Malcolm, surnamed Ceanmor or Great Head—a name which Scotsmen hold in affectionate remembrance to this day—succeeded to the crown of Scotia.



The memory of Macbeth, like a ruthless ghost, still haunts the district of which he was, without dispute, the hereditary ruler. The site of the spot where he is said to have met the three witches is even now the subject of lively local dispute. A piece of uneven heather-carpeted land, now thickly planted with Scotch firs, whose red stems and cheerless foliage cast a sort of eerie gloom over the scene quite in keeping with the story, known as the Hardmuir, which the traveller by the Highland Railway cannot fail to notice on his journey between Brodie and Nairn, is most commonly credited as Shakespeare's famous "heath." There is a tradition, too, that Macbeth's castle was at Forres and not at Inverness, and a green mound adjoining the town, surmounted by a very modern ruin, where a castle unquestionably once stood, is pointed out to strangers as its site. Moreover, the surname of Macbeth still lingers in the locality. If Shakespeare and Holinshed between them have done nothing else for Moray, they have, at least, indissolubly localised the legend of Macbeth with the district immediately surrounding "Fores."

Macbeth and Lulach the Fatuous were the first and last kings that Moray gave to Scotia. Things might have been different if Macbeth's successor had been such a one as himself; for Macbeth was a popular monarch, and had a strong personal following. But the Moravian dynasty was like the seed sown in stony ground. When Malcolm's sun arose it was scorched, and because it had no root it withered away. And with it disappears, for a time at least, the glory of Moray.

It is important to keep in view the actual position of affairs.

Malcolm succeeded Lulach as Ardri or sovereign ruler of Scotia—the district to the east and south of the Spey. But whatever rights he may have claimed over the independent principality of Moray, which adjoined it, were at first nominal

only. On the other hand, Macbeth, and Lulach after him, had been, in the words of one of the old chronicles, "kings of Moravia and Scotia." The title of king, however, was only applicable to their authority over Scotia. Within Moray their proper designation was merely that of maormor. The little that is known of the nature and extent of this office may be summed up in a few words. From primitive times, as we have seen, Celtic Scotland had been divided into tribes, "great tribes," and provinces. The heads of these various divisions all went by the generic term of *ri* or *regulus*. But the correct name for the chief officer of a tribe was toisech or toshach, and of a "great tribe," maormor.

Maormor means the great maor or mair; but the meaning of the word maor in Celtic times is still matter of uncertainty. We can but guess at it from the knowledge we possess of the functions attached to the office as we find it later on in the days of feudalism. For officers bearing the name existed till comparatively recent times. Sir John Skene, in his work 'De Verborum Significatione,' says a mair is an officer or executor of summonses, and adds that he is otherwise called *Præco Regis*, the king's crier or herald. In the Act 1426, c. 99, the mair is described as the "king's sergeant," and entitled to bear a "horn and a wand." All persons possessing rights of jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases, such as kings, sheriffs, earls, and thanes, had mairs to summon those amenable to their authority to their tribunals. To the mair also was committed the duty of carrying out the decrees of the court; of arresting and poinding the personal estate of fugitives and of law-breakers; of discharging, in fact, the most of the duties which now fall to a messenger-at-arms or a sheriff-officer.

The tendency of ancient times was to constitute every office of emolument or distinction, however insignificant, a

hereditary one. Thus in the Culdee Church there were hereditary co-ärbs or abbots. The office of sheriff was heritable. The Lords of the Isles had their hereditary physicians—the Beatons of Mull. The Macrimmons of Skye were the hereditary pipers of the Macleods of Dunvegan; and attached to the lordship of Brechin there were actually hereditary blacksmiths.

We need not be astonished, therefore, to learn that there were hereditary maors in connection with the various jurisdictions above mentioned. These officers were termed mairs-of-fee. Sometimes they were remunerated for their services by fees, which they were entitled to levy themselves—from which one gathers that the office was closely akin to that of coroner, with which it is occasionally found combined. But, as a rule, each mair-of-fee had in addition certain lands annexed to his office; and it was doubtless these which rendered the appointment so much sought after.

Arguing from these premises, it may be fairly enough assumed that the Celtic maor was, like the mair in feudal times, an executive officer of the *ri tuath*, or *toshach*; that the maormor held the same relation towards the *ri mortuath*; and that both these offices came in time to be hereditary, and carried with them the possession of certain lands assigned to them in remuneration for their official services.

In a wide area like the province of Moray there were many tuaths, and therefore many maors. But there seems to have been only one mortuath and one maormor. And this office was hereditary in the family to which Macbeth belonged. We know as a fact of five who preceded him. The first is Ruadhri, or Rory, the father of Maelbrigd, whom the Norsemen called Tönn, or Maelbrigd of the Tooth. Maelbrigd had a son called Malcolm. But the dignity did not at once descend to him. His brother

Finleikr was elected. Then came Malcolm's turn. After him came Gillacomgan, Malcolm's brother. And after him Finleikr's son Macbeth. The succession is thus in strict accordance with the rules of tanistry. It is father to son, son to brother, uncle to nephew, and cousin to cousin. And after Macbeth's death, when the office descended to Lulach, it was another instance of cousin to cousin.

It not unfrequently happens that a subordinate office, especially if it is an executive one, comes in time to supersede that from which it derives its authority. Thus the hereditary stewards of the Scottish kings became in time the kings themselves, and the mayors of the palace the kings of the Franks. This seems to have happened in the case of the maormors also. At the period at which we have now arrived the maormor of Moray was not only its hereditary prince, but an independent one as well.

No period of Moravian history is more obscure than that which followed the accession of Malcolm Ceanmor. The chaos is so complete that any connected narrative is almost impossible. On Lulach's death Thorfinn, who had all along been Malcolm's ally—one might almost say his partner—seems to have made an attempt to continue his feeling of opposition to Ceanmor. But Thorfinn was slain in battle, possibly in the great fight at Lumphanan in 1057, and thus the greatest obstacle to Malcolm's intended pacification, or—to give it its proper name—conquest of the district, was removed. In 1078 a further step was taken in the same direction. Malcolm invaded Moray with a great army, defeated Lulach's son Maelsnectan, who was then its maormor, and "won his mother and all his best men, together with all his treasure and cattle." Maelsnectan himself escaped with difficulty, and in 1085—seven years after—he died in the old stronghold of Deabhra in Lochaber which had been

his father's residence, without making any attempt to regain his kingdom. This was Malcolm's last effort to bring the men of Moray under his subjection. He was slain in battle in 1092, after a glorious but uneasy reign of thirty-five years.

During the successive reigns of his brothers, Donald Bane and Eadgar, we hear of no further attempts to bring Moravia under Scottic rule. The district continued to be governed by its native rulers. To Maelsnectan had succeeded Angus, Lulach's grandson by his daughter, who was killed in battle in the beginning of the reign of David I. His death brought the direct line of Moray maormors to an end.

But aspirants to the dignity still remained. Two families—the one called MacHeth, whose founder, Wymund, claimed to be the son of Angus, the other known as that of Mac-William—disputed for the pre-eminence. And the struggle continued till the pretensions of both were extinguished by King Alexander II. in 1222.

King Eadgar, Malcolm Ceanmor's son, died in 1107. By his testament he divided his kingdom between his two brothers, Alexander and David. To the one he bequeathed the districts north of the Firths of Forth and Clyde, to the other those on the south of them. Alexander's share thus included the whole of the kingdom of Scotia, with the single exception of the Lothians.

Alexander I. died in 1124, and at his death his brother David succeeded to his possessions. David therefore is the first king of all Scotland. In his reign the processes, first of Saxonisation, and secondly of feudalisation, which had been going on uninterruptedly from the time of Malcolm Ceanmor, assumed concrete form. The old Celtic polity was obliterated, civilisation settled down into modern shape, and the progress of the nation was directed into the channels

in which it continued to run for the whole remaining period of its history.

We shall have occasion in the sequel to consider this subject in fuller detail. Meantime it may be sufficient to note the more important changes which had ensued in the district with which we are concerned before the conclusion of the reign of David I. in 1153.

These consisted of the establishment of burghs, the erection of a diocese of Moray, the conversion of the toshach into the thane, and of the maormor into the earl. As the history of the first two of these will be fully narrated in the chapter specially devoted to them, we may confine ourselves at present to the last two.

Malcolm Ceanmor's marriage in 1069 to Margaret, sister of Eadgar the Atheling of England, had been the means of introducing into Scotland a flood of Saxon notions, Saxon offices, and Saxon titles.

Amongst these were the office and title of thane. The *gesith* or *thegn* was, in early England, one whom the king selected as his comrade. He was his companion in arms and his companion at the board. And as he lived by his bounty, he was expected in return to do his master loyal service with every faculty of mind and body which he possessed.

It was natural that on the members of such a *corps d'élite* the king should bestow all the good things at his disposal. Very soon they had absorbed all the more confidential offices connected with his Court and person. These offices could not be maintained without expense, and grants of public lands soon followed to remunerate them for their services. From this to their establishment as an order of local nobility was but a step; from this to their absorption of the highest offices of State was but another. As the system was based

on military service, it contained the germ of what afterwards became feudalism. But in England the process of development from Saxon thanedom to Norman feudalism was a gradual one. The one grew into the other naturally and insensibly. The Conquest only put the copestone on a fabric the foundation of which had been laid centuries before.

In Scotland it was different. The introduction of thanedom was no natural growth of the soil ; it was an exotic forced upon it from without. Whether it was Malcolm Ceanmor himself, or whether it was one of his successors, who introduced it, is uncertain. But at any rate it came into existence somewhere about this time.

The Scottish thane had little in common with the English *thegn* except his name. It was hardly to be expected that the king would choose his companions from the rude chiefs of semi-barbarous tribes. But any system which would attach these brave but troublesome potentates more firmly to his person and dignity was a distinct advance in civilisation. And this was effected by constituting the toshachs into a body of local nobility, by intrusting to them the administration or stewardship of the Crown lands, and by recompensing them for their services by grants of territory. And on this footing the name and the office continued till after the death of Alexander III., when the name was given up ; and by converting the thanages into baronages, the dignity was placed on a standard more in consonance with the feudalism of the day. In the province of Moray there were thanages of Dingwall, Moyness, Dyke and Brodie, Cawdor, Moravia or Moray, Kilmalemnok, and Cromdale. Whether these exhaust their number or not it is now impossible to say.

The principle of comradeship, which, as we have seen, underlay English *thegndom*, was not, however, lost sight of

in the new polity, which had come in with Malcolm Great Head.<sup>1</sup>

In England the *thegns* had supplanted the old Eorls. They were destined to be themselves supplanted by the new earls which the Conquest and the establishment of feudalism introduced into England.

In the time of Malcolm Ceanmor feudalism, though it had begun to exist in England, had not reached Scotland, nor, considering his relations with Eadgar the Atheling, was it likely that it would do so for some time to come. It is no strained assumption, therefore, that the earls whom Malcolm Ceanmor created—if indeed he did create them—were intended to resemble the old Saxon *thegns*, whose office was based on the principle of sodality, rather than the Norman earls, whose distinction was founded on the possession of lands and the military service attached thereto. The Latin equivalent of earl is *comes* or companion, which shows that the sentiment of comradeship underlay both dignities. In England, however, sentiment had already given place to necessity; and the existence of the earl was grounded rather on his ability to support a certain number of men-at-arms who would fight the king's battles, than on the feeling of personal friendship with which his sovereign regarded, or professed to regard, him.

In Scotland it was otherwise. The first earls had no territorial connection. The title was a personal one only. Up to the time of David I. the earls appended "*comes*" to their names; and that was all. They were not earls of this place or that, but the *comites*, the comrades, of their king.

<sup>1</sup> It is hardly necessary to remark that Malcolm's title of Ceanmor (Great Head) was due to the wisdom, courage, and success which had raised him to be the great head of his people, and had nothing to do with any physical peculiarity.



In selecting the persons upon whom he chose to confer the distinction of being styled his companions, it was only natural that the king should not go outside the class who held the highest rank within their respective districts. In northern Scotland there was none so exalted as the maormors—the old independent native princes—or who exercised a greater influence over them. Hence we find that "benorth the Firths" the maormors were the first earls of Scotland.

It is impossible to assign a definite date to the creation of the dignity. But there are the strongest grounds for believing that thanedoms and earldoms came into existence about the same time, and as parts of the same system. The two offices seem to have differed only in degree. Much the same duties were assigned to each. The earl was bound to protect the interests of the Crown as well as of the thane, —the only distinction being in the extent of the area of their respective jurisdictions. Neither of the offices was originally based on either a hereditary or a territorial foundation, although later they became both.

The first earls were certainly the maormors of the seven provinces of Scotland, of which Moray was one. But in the time of Alexander I. we find traces of a mysterious body which goes by the name of the Seven Earls of Scotland, and seems to have exercised functions similar to the Witenagemot of the Saxon monarchs of England. The names of the members of this enigmatical corporation—for such it appears to have been—cannot be identified in all cases with the descendants of the native rulers of the old seven provinces, for there is no representative of the maormors of Moray amongst them, and there are others who belong to districts which never achieved the importance of independent maormorships. While, therefore, it is impossible to assert that they were in any sense representatives of

these old territorial divisions, it is equally impossible to resist the conviction that their number was originally fixed with reference to these ancient jurisdictions.

The partition of the kingdom into counties (*vice-comitatus*) or shires, with the sheriff or shire-reeve as their titular head—a division which took place somewhere about the time of David I.—wiped out the old provincial delimitations of the country.

From this time, therefore, the province of Moray as an actual historical entity ceases to exist. The name, however, survived, and is not yet fallen totally into disuse ; only, henceforward the limits of the so-called province of Moray were those attributed to it by its historian Lachlan Shaw. It included “all the plain country by the seaside, from the mouth of the river Spey to the river of Farar or Beaulie, at the head of the Frith ; and all the valleys, glens, and straths situated betwixt the Grampian Mountains south of Badenoch and the Frith of Moray, and which discharges rivers into that Frith.”



II.

THE BISHOPRIC OF MORAY



## II.

### THE BISHOPRIC OF MORAY.

THE BISHOPRIC OF MORAY FOUNDED BY ALEXANDER I.—THE CHURCHES OF BIRNIE, KINNEDDAR, AND SPYNIE THE CATHEDRALS OF THE BISHOPS OF MORAY—ELGIN CATHEDRAL—THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CHAPTER—THE EARLY BISHOPS OF MORAY—THE RAID OF THE WOLF OF BADENOCH—THE CASTLE OF SPYNIE—THE POWER OF THE BISHOPS—BISHOP FORMAN—THE RESTORED CATHEDRAL—THE RANK AND DUTIES AND EMOLUMENTS OF THE DIGNITARIES—PATRICK HEPBURN, THE LAST ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF MORAY—THE PROTESTANT BISHOPS: GUTHRIE, MACKENZIE, AITKEN, FALCONAR—THE CATHEDRAL ALLOWED TO FALL INTO DECAY—JOHN SHANKS, THE COBBLER—THE PRIORY OF PLUSCARDEN—THE ABBEY OF KINLOSS.

THE death of Eadgar, son of Malcolm Ceanmor, in 1107, had been followed, as we have seen, by the partition of his kingdom between his two brothers, Alexander and David.

Alexander was the younger of the two; yet to him, probably on account of his more energetic temperament, Eadgar had bequeathed the more important portion of his principality—the whole of the kingdom of Scotia, —leaving to David only the region south of the Firths of Forth and Clyde, with the title of Earl of Cumbria.

Alexander's father had been a soldier; his mother had been a saint. He himself combined the characters of both. Whilst to his enemies he was "terrible beyond measure,"

“fierce and implacable,” “a right high-hearted and right manly king,” towards the Church he was humble and submissive, “most zealous in building churches, in searching for relics of saints, in providing and arranging priestly vestments and sacred books ; most open-handed, even beyond his means, to all new-comers, and so devoted to the poor that he seemed to delight in nothing so much as in supporting, washing, nourishing, and clothing them.”

One of his first cares on succeeding to the Crown was to provide for the spiritual wants of his kingdom. There was at this time but one bishopric within its borders—that of St Andrews. It was a very ancient foundation, dating from the beginning of the tenth century ; and being the only one, its bishops were accustomed to call themselves *Episcopi Scottorum*. But one bishopric was clearly not sufficient for so large a country as Scotland beyond the Firths. Alexander accordingly determined to create two others. The one was the bishopric of Dunkeld ; the other was that of Moray. The first in order of foundation was the bishopric of Moray.

If any definition of its original limits ever existed, it probably perished, like so many other old writs and titles, in the great fire of 1390. It is unlikely, however, that its boundaries ever extended farther north than the Moray Firth. For in 1128 we find David I.—Alexander’s brother and successor—establishing a bishopric of Ross, with the Firth for its eastern boundary.

Beyond the facts that it was founded in 1107—the first year of Alexander’s reign—and that its first bishop was a monk of the name of Gregorius, we know almost nothing about it.

In the Laigh of Moray—the low-lying district between the mouths of the Spey and the Findhorn—there were in those

days three churches of more than ordinary importance, all lying close together, and none of them more than five miles from the town of Elgin. These were Birnie, Kinneddar, and Spynie. Each of these churches was in turn the cathedral of the early bishops of Moray.

The church of Birnie, when it became the cathedral of the newly-erected diocese, was probably, like all the early Celtic churches, a building of wood and wattle. But the present quaint old parish church, which succeeded it, is undoubtedly a very ancient structure, and is possibly, after that of Mortlach in Banffshire, the oldest place of worship still in use in the north of Scotland. The date of its erection was certainly not later than 1150, and possibly not much earlier. Its walls are built with square ashlar-work of freestone. It has a nave and a chancel, connected by a handsome Norman arch. And in it is still preserved an old square-sided Celtic altar-bell of malleable iron, riveted and covered with bronze, known as the Ronnell bell, similar in character to that of St Fillan's at Glendrochat, and of many others found in different parts of Scotland. The peculiar sanctity of this venerable church is recognised in the old local saying that to be thrice prayed for in the kirk of Birnie will "either mend ye or end ye." According to Lachlan Shaw, the historian of Moray, the word Birnie is derived from *brenoth*, a brae or high land, which very accurately describes the nature of the ground on which the church stands. Birnie seems to have been the cathedral of the diocese during the rule of its first four bishops—that is, up to the death of the English bishop Simon de Toeny in 1184. After that, for a short time, possibly for not much more than a quarter of a century, Kinneddar—a name which, according to Shaw, is derived from Cean Edir, "the point between the sea (the Moray Firth) and the loch (the Loch of Spynie)"—takes its place.



The distance between Birnie and Kinneddar is about eight miles from south to north as the crow flies. Why the old bishops removed their see from the sunny slopes of the Mannoch Hill to the bleak shores of the Moray Firth is a matter of which we must be content to remain in ignorance. But if sanctity of locality had anything to do with it, there was much to justify the change. For Kinneddar, for at least two centuries before this, had been regarded as one of the most holy places within the diocese.

Hither, somewhere about 934, had come a certain Irish Culdee or Deicola (a servant of God), burning with zeal to preach the Gospel to the benighted dwellers of these parts. His name was Gervadius or Gernadius. Like all of his order at first, he was an ascetic and an anchorite. Selecting one of the many caves which the winds and the waves had scooped out of the soft freestone of the Lossiemouth rocks, he took up his residence there—his bed the damp rock, his food the bread of charity, his drink the water of a spring which trickled down above his solitary cell. But his work was blessed. He managed to associate with himself “many other fellow-soldiers in Christ,” and at last, under angelic direction, he established an oratory at “Kenedor.” And here, after his death, the church of Kinneddar was erected. In 1842 the foundations of this church were still said to be visible in the centre of what is now the kirkyard of the parish church of Drainie.

More fortunate than others of his kind, his memory is not yet forgotten in the district. A picturesque tradition relates how on stormy nights he used to pace the shore beneath his cell, lantern in hand, to warn passing vessels off the rocks; and, with admirable propriety, the corporate seal of the newly-constituted burgh of Lossiemouth and Bran-

derburgh has embodied the story in its armorial bearings. But the very promontory on whose "braeside" he found a home—it is named Holyman Head in ancient charters—has been nearly all quarried away in recent years; and with it "St Geraldine's" home and fountain. Up to 1870 the former, indeed, still existed, and was secluded from the intrusion of the profane by a "Gothic door and window." But a drunken ship-captain broke them down, and the quarryman's pick soon after completed the destruction of the sanctuary. The episcopal residence of the bishops of those times—the "Castle" of Kinneddar, as it came in after-years to be called—was only a few yards distant from the church. Nothing remains of it, however, but a small and shapeless block of ancient masonry, from which no idea of its size or its architecture can be obtained.

Sometime between 1203 and 1222, during the rule of Bishop Bricius, the sixth bishop, the episcopal seat was removed to Spynie. Bricius is the first of the bishops of Moray who is anything more to us than a name. A scion of the house of Douglas, and closely connected with the powerful family of De Moravia, he had been Prior of Lesmahago, and had travelled both in England and on the Continent. An enlightened and energetic prelate, Bricius may be said to have laid the foundations of the glorious future of the bishopric. To him is attributed the creation of a chapter of eight secular canons, and the establishment of a constitution for the cathedral, based upon, if it was not a literal transcript of, that of Lincoln.<sup>1</sup> His benefactions to

<sup>1</sup> The 'Registrum Moraviense' contains no special constitution for the Cathedral of Elgin, but only a copy of the "Constitutiones Lyncolnienses." It is plain from the future history of the cathedral that these were adopted *in toto* as its rule of government.

the church were large ; his benefactions to his own family were greater. The one blot upon his reputation is his character for nepotism.

Spynie was certainly a pleasanter place of residence than bleak Kinneddar. It was about three miles farther inland, and had a more genial climate. The little knoll on which two hundred years later was erected the magnificent baronial residence of the bishops of Moray, and under the lee of which Bishop Bricius proceeded to build his cathedral, stands on the shores of what was at the time the finest lacustrine sheet of water in the kingdom.

The old loch of Spynie, before the costly drainage operations of the early part of this century converted it into an almost stagnant pool of some 120 acres, was a wide expanse of water stretching from the Moray Firth up to within two and a half miles of Elgin, varying at different periods of its history from four to six miles in length, and covering an area of more than 2000 acres. Its convenience was only equalled by its beauty. Ships from all parts of the world could land their goods right beneath the castle walls. Its waters were full of salmon, sea-trout, and pike. Its surface was covered with islets which went by the old Norse name of holms—Long Holm and Lint Holm and the Picture Holm, Tappie's Holm and Skene's Holm, and many another. Majestic swans sunned their gleaming breasts on its waters, or shed their snowy plumage on its emerald eyots, or fed upon the "swan-girss" that grew by its shores. Bulrushes edged its banks, bitterns boomed from the surrounding swamps, wild geese and ducks, herons and coots, sought out its quiet pools, otters haunted its shores ; and in spring the black-headed gull (*Larus ridibundus*) laid its green eggs, delicate as those of plovers, amongst the reeds and rushes

that grew in graceful luxuriance on its sides. The high ground that surrounded it became covered with prosperous farms basking under the genial protection of their ecclesiastical landlords. A thriving village uprose beneath the castle walls. Ferry-boats with brown sails plied between it and Covesea. A foot-walk known by the name of the Long Steps—formed by placing large blocks of stone in the water and covering them with a flat pavement—bridged its upper end. The once solitary loch became the scene of much busy traffic and wellbeing. All this is changed now. A dreary marsh, bisected by the county road from Elgin to Lossiemouth, has replaced a scene of almost ideal beauty. Yet to this day there are those who cling to the hope that the avenging sea will break down the barriers which now exclude it, and the prophecy of William Hay, a local poet, will be fulfilled :—

“ The Loch o’ Spynie’s comin’ back, an’ spite o’ sinfu’ men,  
Bullsegs will wave their nigger pows, and geds will bite again ! ”

No traces now remain of the cathedral church of Spynie ; but within the last forty years an old Gothic gable—plainly the fragment of an ecclesiastical edifice—might have been seen standing in mournful isolation on a spot adjoining the present site of the kirkyard, which lies on the southern slope of the hill. Whether this belonged to Bishop Bricius’s cathedral, or whether it was a fragment of a post-Reformation structure, has never yet been determined.

It appears that Bricius was hardly established in his episcopal seat before he was desirous of having it altered. We find him at Rome in 1215, attending the Lateran Council there, and pestering Pope Honorius III. to consent to its transfer to Elgin. Spynie, he said, was a solitary place ; it

was not safe ; the clergy had great difficulty in procuring the necessaries of life ; divine worship was much obstructed. A much better situation would be the Church of the Holy Trinity near Elgin, a building of whose existence we now learn for the first time. Convinced by the bishop's representations, the Pope wrote to King Alexander II. recommending him to accede to the bishop's request, provided he was himself satisfied with its propriety. But it was not till two years after Bishop Bricius's death that the transfer actually took place.

It was during the incumbency of his successor and kinsman, Andrew de Moravia (1222-1242), that the Cathedral of Moray was finally established on the banks of the Lossie. This bishop had all his predecessor's ecclesiastical ambition, with a much greater share of wisdom and prudence. He is supposed to have been the son of Hugh de Moravia, Lord of Duffus, and before his elevation to the bishopric he had been parson of Duffus. The site of the present cathedral was at that time occupied by a church dedicated to the Holy Trinity. Though not within the boundaries of the burgh, but merely "*juxta Elgyn*," it was the only place of worship available to the burghers. It was a handsome and spacious building, with transepts, choir, and nave. It had only lately been erected ; for the gable of it, which still remains, shows that it may have been built any time between 1180 and the beginning of the thirteenth century. In addition to this it was situated on a piece of low-lying, sheltered, and very fertile land, close to the river Lossie, and in convenient proximity to the town of Elgin. The selection of this church as the cathedral seat of what was even then one of the greater dioceses in Scotland, was thus abundantly justified.

Hither accordingly, on a brilliant summer's day in July 1224, repaired a stately procession of bishops, priests, and regulars, with sacred banners and solemn chants. Entering the holy edifice, High Mass was sung; the Papal Bull was read; the impressive ceremony of consecration was performed by Gilbert, Bishop of Caithness; and when the imposing pageant was over, the Church of the Holy Trinity had been transformed into the Cathedral of Elgin. The sacred lamp had been lighted which was to blaze forth to after-ages as the "Lantern of the North."

Bishop Andrew immediately began the secular alterations necessitated by the church's augmented dignity. Very little, if any of it, was demolished, but the whole edifice was doubtless considerably enlarged. The transepts of the old building were retained, and the southern one is standing to this day. If the choir and nave were proportionate to these, it must have been a structure of ample size and of very considerable beauty. There is a tradition that Andrew de Moravia lived to see the completion of his work. One would fain hope it is true. Yet when Master Gregory the mason, and Master Richard the glazier, and many another master of his craft, had lavished all the gifts of his art upon its adornment, much remained for after-ages to do.

Bishop Bricius had done his best to establish the temporal power of the bishopric upon a solid foundation. Andrew de Moravia continued his predecessor's work. Still further to increase its dignity, he proceeded to add thirteen new canons to the eight—or ten, the number is not certain—endowed by Bishop Bricius, making twenty-three in all; and of this number the chapter consisted for more than two hundred and fifty years, until it was increased to twenty-four during the incumbency of William de Spynie in the end of the fourteenth century.

Dealing with the chapter as finally constituted, we find the canons divided into two classes. Eight of them, in addition to their prebends, had offices of dignity in connection with the cathedral. The remaining sixteen had none.

The eight dignified clergy who resided permanently within the college, their duties as parish ministers being discharged by vicars, were :—

1. The bishop. As bishop he had no spiritual pre-eminence in the chapter. His place there, as well as his stall in the choir, was assigned to him solely in virtue of his prebendary of the lands of Ferness, Lethen, Dunlichty, and Tullydivie (in Edinkillie).
2. The dean, whose church and prebend was the church of Auldearn.
3. The precentor, who had for prebend the churches of Lhanbride and Alves.
4. The treasurer, with the churches and parishes of Kinneddar and Eskyl for his prebend.
5. The chancellor, who was provided for by the churches and parishes of Strathavon, and Urquhart in Inverness-shire.
6. The archdeacon, whose endowment was the churches and parishes of Forres and Logie.
7. The sub-dean, who had the altarage of Eryn (Auldearn), the chapelry of Invernairn (Nairn), and the church and parish of Dolles, now Dallas.
8. The succentor, who had the churches and parishes of Rafford and Fothervaye.

The prebends of the remaining canons, who were in residence only for a certain time each year, were :—

9. The churches and parishes of Spynie and Kintrae. The last was one of the most ancient foundations in the

diocese. An "old church" is mentioned as existing there in the days of Bishop Bricius.

10. The churches of Ruthven<sup>1</sup> and Dipple.
11. The church and parish of Rhynie<sup>2</sup> (now in Aberdeenshire).
12. The churches of Dumbennan and Kynnore.
13. The church and parish of Innerkethny.
14. The churches of Elchies and Botarie.
15. The parsonage tithes of the parish of Moy.
16. The churches and parishes of Cromdale and Advie.
17. The churches of Kingussie and Insh.
18. The churches of Croy and Dunlichtie.
19. A hundred shillings of the altarage of St Giles of Elgin, to which was afterwards added the vicarage of the same.
20. The parsonage tithes of Petty and Brackla in Nairnshire.
21. The tithes of Boharm and Aberlour in Banffshire.
22. The church and parish of Duffus.
23. The church and parish of Duthil.
24. The chapelry of the Blessed Virgin in the Castle of Duffus, erected into the prebendary of Unthank in 1542.

Such was the chapter, and such were the sources from which its benefices were derived.

We shall have to consider the value of these benefices later on, when the bishopric had reached its utmost height of wealth

<sup>1</sup> The old parishes of Ruthven and Botarie (or Pittarie), which formerly belonged to Banffshire, have changed both their name and their county. They now form the united parish of Cairnie, in the north-west of Aberdeenshire.

<sup>2</sup> The parishes of Essie (Banffshire) and Rhynie (Aberdeenshire) were united at a very early period.



and magnificence. Meantime it is sufficient to say that the splendid basis on which Bishop Andrew established his college was largely due to his own personal exertions and to the munificent endowments of his relatives and friends.

From the list we have given of the prebends we obtain a fairly accurate idea of the extent of the diocese as it was in the days of Andrew de Moravia. It will be observed that they were situated in the modern counties of Aberdeen, Banff, Elgin, Nairn, and Inverness. With trifling variations, incident to the subsequent establishment of conterminous bishoprics, its boundaries remained the same to the end of the chapter. "It seems," says Professor Cosmo Innes, "to have extended along the coast from the river Forn,<sup>1</sup> its boundary with Ross, to the Spey. Bounded by Loch Aber on the south, it included the country surrounding Loch Ness, the valleys of the Nairn and Findhorn, Badenoch and Strathspey, the valleys of the Avon and Fiddich, and all the upper part of Banffshire, comprehending Strathyla and Strathbog in Aberdeenshire, but not extending into the district of Einzie and Boyne." In short, its limits were almost identical with those which Lachlan Shaw assigns to the province, in the later and more restricted signification of the word, and slightly more contracted than those of the earldom when it was granted by Robert the Bruce to his "dear nephew" Thomas Randolph nearly a hundred years later.

What must have rendered the work of Andrew de Moravia easier was the favour in which he stood with his king. Alexander II. not only gave the land on which it was erected, but afterwards endowed the cathedral with a chaplaincy for prayer for his own soul and those of his predecessors, especially for

<sup>1</sup> The water of Forn or Forne was the old name of the whole of the streams now known as the Farrar, Glass, Beaul, Affaric, Deabhaibh, and Cannich, from Cairncross or Carnchoite to the sea.

that of King Duncan his ancestor. And, sometimes alone, sometimes with his queen, Marie de Couci, he visited Elgin at various times both before and after the death of the bishop. He was there in 1221, and again in 1228. He spent his Yule there in 1231, and we find him back in 1244. To these repeated visits Moray, and especially the country around Elgin, owes much. The Priory of Pluscarden, the Maisondieu of Elgin, the Greyfriars' and Blackfriars' monasteries in the same town, were all founded during his reign. Religion—and in those days religion was equivalent to civilisation—never had a truer friend than this pious, well-meaning, and often much harassed king. As for Bishop Andrew, he is a prelate of whom we would gladly have known more. There are few names more illustrious in the history of the diocese. He died in 1242. Where he was buried is not even recorded.

The next three bishops—Simon (1242-1251); Ralph, a canon of Lincoln, who seems to have died before consecration; and Archibald (1253-1298)—have left no traces of their incumbencies beyond the fact that the last seems to have selected the Castle of Kinneddar as his usual place of residence.

During this period the cathedral had its own share of vicissitudes. In 1244 it received some considerable injury—no one knows exactly what; in 1270 it was seriously damaged by fire. Each of these events seems to have been seized upon as a fitting opportunity to add to its beauty and its convenience. After some considerable fluctuation of opinion, the most competent judges are now prepared to admit that to the first of these dates may be referable the choir central aisle, nave, outer south aisle, and the two west towers; and to the latter the choir aisles, south-west porch, perhaps the two buttresses north and south at the east part of the choir, and the chapter-house.

The next bishop, David, was also a member of the house

of De Moravia. He was consecrated in 1299 and died in 1325. He lived in stirring times. The country was in the throes of the War of Independence. Robert the Bruce was striving thence and sinew to rescue his native country from English supremacy. Every man was a politician in those days. David of Moray was a strong partisan of the patriotic party. Hailes tells us that he preached to the people of his diocese that it was no less meritorious to rise in arms to support the cause of Bruce than to engage in a crusade against the Saracens. If a churchman has a right to meddle in politics at all, these remarkable utterances of a minister of the Gospel of peace need no apology. David has another claim to the grateful recognition of his countrymen. He is said to have been the founder of the Scots College at Paris. Little as we know about him, that little seems to impress his personality upon our imagination. He stands out amongst all the vague, visionary, and venerable figures of the earlier holders of the see, a strong, commanding, and chivalrous individuality, like all the other recorded members of his race.

The next of the bishops of Moray whose career deserves attention is Alexander Bur or Barr, who held the see from 1362 to 1397. During his incumbency occurred the most lawless raid to which the Cathedral and its precincts were ever exposed.

Robert II., the first of the Stewart kings, died in 1390. By his first wife, the daughter of Sir Adam Mure of Rowallan, he left four sons and six daughters. The eldest of these sons succeeded him on the throne as King Robert III. The second, Alexander, was invested with the lordships of Badenoch and Buchan, which had been part of the inheritance of the Comyns, and in addition to these he held the earldom of Ross in right of his wife, Euphemia, the widow of Walter

de Leslie. He was also his brother Robert's seneschal or lieutenant for the whole of the kingdom north of the Forth.

The name by which he is best known in history—the Wolf of Badenoch—describes him to the life. Cruel, vindictive, and despotic,—a Celtic Attila, as he has been called,—he resembles one of those half-human, half-bestial barons depicted in Erckmann-Chatrian's romances, who were the terror of France and Germany during the middle ages.

By his wife, the countess, he had no children, and he had accordingly left her to live with another woman,—a certain Mariot, daughter of Athyn,—who had already borne him several sons. The outraged countess applied to the bishops of Moray and Ross for redress, and in 1389 they, as consistorial judges, pronounced at Inverness decree of adherence in her favour against her husband, ordering him at the same time to find security for his future good behaviour towards her in the sum of £200. This was more than the Wolf could brook, and he determined upon revenge. He seized upon some lands belonging to the Bishop of Moray in Badenoch. The bishop promptly excommunicated him. All the savagery in his nature was now roused. Sending out the fiery cross, he gathered his fierce caterans together,—“wyld wykkyd Hieland-men” Wyntoun calls them,—and swooping down from his stronghold of Lochindorb, he burned the town of Forres, the choir of the church of St Lawrence there, and the manse of the archdeacon in the neighbourhood of the town. Intoxicated with success, he resolved on still further reprisals. Tramping over the twelve miles of heather and holt which in those days separated the towns of Forres and Elgin, he arrived in the cathedral city one morning early in June 1390. It was the day of the feast of the Blessed Abbot Botulph. The honest burgesses were awakened from their peaceful slumbers by the noise of crackling timbers and blinding clouds

of smoke. The whole town was in flames. Meantime the ruthless incendiaries were at work on the public buildings. The parish church of St Giles was blazing, the hospital of *Maison-dieu* was in a similar condition ; so were the eighteen noble and beautiful manses of the canons situated within the precinct walls, "and, what is most grievously to be lamented, the noble and highly adorned church of Moray, the delight of the country and ornament of the kingdom, with all the books, charters, and other goods of the country placed therein."

For such an outrage no punishment would have been too great. We may well believe that if the Church had had the power to inflict a sentence upon the miscreants commensurate with the enormity of their offence, it would not have failed in its duty. But the Wolf was already an excommunicated person. No human authority, not even that of the Pope himself, could do him further harm.

Alexander cared as little for excommunication as he did for its symbol—the blowing out of a candle. His vengeance accomplished, he rode off chuckling and uninjured.

The popular tradition, that before his death, which occurred on the 20th February 1394,<sup>1</sup> he repented of his crimes, and actually did penance for his sacrilege, rests on no higher authority than that of the clerical scribe who wrote the '*Quædam Memorabilia*'—an unauthoritative chronicle of events in Scottish and English history between the years 1390 and 1402—appended to the *Chartulary of Moray*. None of the old historians mention it. Fordun says nothing

<sup>1</sup> Considerable doubt has recently been thrown upon the assertion that the tomb in Dunkeld Cathedral so long believed to be his is really that of the Wolf of Badenoch, in a paper by Mr Robert Brydall on "The Monumental Effigies of Scotland," in the '*Proceedings of the Antiquarian Society*,' May 13, 1895, vol. xxix. pp. 377, 378. Mr Brydall maintains that the tomb is that of another Dominus de Badenoch, who died on 26th July, year illegible, and that the armour is that of the fifteenth century.

about it; neither does Wyntoun; neither does the 'Liber Pluscardensis.' It is hardly likely that an event which would have so imminently vindicated the authority of Mother Church should have been omitted by such devoted churchmen. Until further confirmation is obtained we must set down the story as one of those pious fibs which, unfortunately, are not uncommon in the writings of ecclesiastical chroniclers, whose zeal for the honour of their subject was often in inverse proportion to their own veracity.

This wanton outrage, besides ruining the bishop, nearly broke his heart. The petition which he shortly after (2d December 1390) addressed to King Robert III. to aid him in the rebuilding of his cathedral is pitiful in its pathos. It was the supplication of a man, he said, so weakened by age, so impoverished by depredations and robberies, so altogether broken down, that he could scarcely keep himself and his few poor servants in life. Yet aged and debilitated as he was, he ventured to appeal to the king to assist him in the re-erection of his church ("*pro remedio re-edificationis ecclesie mee*"). It had been the special ornament of the country, the glory of the kingdom, the delight of strangers, the praise of visitors. Its fame was known and lauded even in foreign lands on account of the multitude of its servitors and its most fair adornments; and in it, he thought he might say, God was duly worshipped. He would not refer to its lofty belfries, to the rich magnificence of its internal decorations, to its wealth of jewels and relics, to the zeal with which he and his canons had laboured in its behalf. All he would do would be to commit the matter into the hands of his most religious and gracious prince, feeling confident that, for the sake of justice, for the proper service of God, and for the advancement of the holy and orthodox faith, the king would grant his most humble and earnest prayer.

Something came of it, we cannot doubt; for twelve years later—William of Spynie (1397-1406) being then the bishop—we find the chanonry again in a state worth despoiling.

“These were the days,” says the ‘*Registrum Moraviense*,’ “when there was no law in Scotland; when the strong oppressed the weak, and the whole kingdom was the prey of freebooters (*totum regnum fuit unum latrocinium*); homicides, depredations, fires, and other misdeeds remained unpunished, and Justice, deported beyond the limits of the kingdom, shrieked aloud.”

Translated into sober prose, the meaning of this impassioned burst of rhetoric is, that in 1402 another band of Highland robbers had dared to lay their impious hands on the patrimony of the Lord’s anointed.

The leader of this new troop of marauders was Alexander, third son of Donald, Lord of the Isles. In July he made a foray upon the chanonry, carried off everything he could lay his hands on, and made off with his booty, after burning down the greater part of the town of Elgin. In October he returned with a great company, meaning to make a clean sweep of everything portable which he had been unable to remove on the former occasion. This time the bishop and his canons were ready for him. Meeting him at the precinct gate, they pointed out to him that the chanonry had enjoyed the privileges of a sanctuary ever since its foundation; that its violation would entail upon him and his followers the pains of excommunication; and, in short, so worked upon the feelings of “Alexander and his captains” that, “their hearts returning to them,” they “confessed their fault, and earnestly begged to be absolved.” Then the bishop, clothing himself in full pontificals, proceeded to the great west doorway of the cathedral, and first there, and afterwards in front of the great altar, solemnly absolved them from their crimes.

The price paid for their absolution was, we are told, a great sum of money. And as an enduring memorial of the triumph of the Church, a cross, now known as the Little Cross, to distinguish it from the town cross, was erected at the east end of the High Street, to mark the spot where the immunities of the chanonry began. This time the entry in the cathedral chartulary is ample and complete as the victory.

For many years after this the restoration of the cathedral to its pristine, and more than pristine, glory, was the lifework of every holder of the office.

Monteith, in his 'Theatre of Mortality,' tells us that on the tomb (now unfortunately demolished by the fall of the great steeple in 1711) of Bishop John Innes, who succeeded William of Spynie in 1407, it was recorded "that he began [the restoration of] this distinguished edifice, and for seven years"—that is to say, during the whole course of his incumbency—"sedulously continued the buildings." He died on the 25th April 1414. And when, on the 18th May following, the chapter met to elect his successor, before proceeding to the weighty business on hand, they solemnly passed the self-denying ordinance that if any of its members was promoted to the bishopric, he should be bound to devote a full third of his benefice to the restoration of the cathedral.

To Bishop John Innes also we owe the erection of the Castle of Spynie. It is, after the cathedral itself, the most splendid ruin in the county; and considering the date of its construction, it must have been, when finally completed, the most magnificent specimen of domestic architecture in the north of Scotland. The bishops of Moray were not only great spiritual princes, but great temporal lords. Hence Spynie is both a palace and a castle; but when first begun, the principal purpose which it was intended to serve was that of a residence for the chief ecclesiastical magistrate of



the diocese. It was nearly seventy years later before it was thought necessary to convert it into a fortress.

The present building consists of a large strong keep at the south-west corner of an extensive quadrangle, finished at each of its three other corners with smaller towers, surrounded by the ruins of other buildings, which appear to have been of an unusually fine and commodious description. These in all probability consisted of reception-rooms, offices, and servants' rooms; and the remains of arches, which at one time contained large traceried windows, justify the tradition that the enclosure also included a chapel.

The gateway in the eastern wall of the courtyard is unique in its way. There is nothing like it in Scotland. In general design and in the style of its mouldings it closely resembles the architecture of France or England. The probable explanation of this is, that it was the work of those foreign builders who were at the time engaged in restoring the cathedral, and whose masons' marks are still to be seen on its pillars and walls. This gateway is the oldest remaining part of the building, and bears the arms of Bishop John Innes. It was defended by a portcullis, and the small stair by which access was gained to the battlements from which the portcullis was worked is still to be seen.

The keep, however, is the most interesting portion of the building. It was built by Bishop David Stewart, who died in 1475, and it still goes by the name of "Davie's Tower." According to the legend, the Earl of Huntly, with whom the bishop had a protracted feud, had threatened to pull the proud prelate "out of his pigeon-hole." To this the bishop retorted that he would build him a house out of which the earl and his whole clan would not be able to drag him. He seems to have kept his word. As a tower of defence and offence there are few castles so admirably constructed as that

of Spynie. The keep is so placed as to form a main defence on the landward side—from which attack was most to be apprehended—to the rest of the buildings; and “it is projected in such a manner beyond the enceinte as to protect it on the east and north.” Its walls are  $10\frac{1}{2}$  feet thick; it contained six storeys; and the height of the corbels which carried the battlements is 70 feet from the ground.

Its internal arrangements are commodious and complete. The basement is divided into two compartments, one of which has evidently been the wine-cellar, for there is a hatch in its south-east corner for hoisting up supplies to one of the small chambers adjoining the great hall; and in the southern and western walls of this cellar are two splayed port-holes for guns, with an aperture to the exterior 6 feet wide and 2 feet high. On the floor above this is the great hall, 42 feet long by  $22\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide. It is a very handsome apartment, with vaulted roof and large windows, and stone seats in their deep bays. The upper storeys were occupied by sleeping-rooms, and in the massive eastern wall was a series of five vaulted chambers, each 6 or 7 feet wide, placed one on the top of the other. These, however, have all now disappeared.

Seen as we see it now, a bare and utterly neglected ruin, with no signs of life about it but the daws cawing round its battlements, and the sheep nibbling the rank grass at its base, it needs an effort of imagination to picture what it was in the days of its glory. Yet for two hundred years and more—till it ceased to be the residence of the bishops in 1686—it must have been the vivifying centre of most of the political, social, and religious life of the district. Busy brains worked in its cell-like chambers; furious passions, uncontrolled ambitions, paced the floor of its majestic hall; dark plots were hatched within its courtyard. Its ruins are haunted by the ghosts of great names and great reputations—sometimes for good, sometimes

for evil. Here the wise Forman taught himself those diplomatic arts which enabled him to settle a dispute between the King of France and the Pope of Rome, and ultimately rewarded him with the primacy of the kingdom. Here the licentious Hepburn told his filthy tales and trolled out his merry songs. Here the notorious Earl of Bothwell, his nephew, learned in his boyish days to look upon principle and morality as but empty names. Here Douglas, the first Protestant bishop, indulged, if we may believe his detractors, his unbridled tastes for the pleasures of the table.

A pleasant place of residence it must have been in those dim and distant days—for dim and distant, indeed, they appear to us when we try to read their history on the spot. The air was pure ; the soil was dry and warm ; the site commanded a wide and smiling prospect. In front was the quiet loch ; in the middle distance, to the north and north-west, stretched the fertile plains of Kinneddar and Duffus ; beyond them was the sea, with the dim shores of Ross and Cromarty and the truncated cone of Morven framing the landscape like a picture. Towards the south the scene was no less happy and restful. There flowed the placid stream of the winding Lossie ; there rose the noble towers and steeple of the great and grave cathedral ; there smoked the chimneys of the peaceful little town of Elgin ; while surrounding the frowning walls of the castle itself, enclosed with a high and strong stone precinct wall, were ten acres of garden-ground, of grassy plots, and of shady walks, the remains of which are still to be seen in the avenue of old trees on the side adjoining what was once the loch.

Bishop Innes was succeeded by Henry de Lychton or Leighton, who was translated to Aberdeen in 1421, and when bishop there was appointed one of the commissioners to England to obtain the release of James I. Then comes Columba

de Dunbar (1422-23-1435), Dean of Dunbar, younger son of George, tenth Earl of March, and nephew of John Dunbar, Earl of Moray. He held the bishopric for upwards of twelve years. We hear of his obtaining a safe-conduct from King Henry VI. of England to pass through his dominions with a retinue of thirty servants, on his way to Rome in 1433, and of his attending the Council of Basle in the following year. He died at Spynie in 1435, and was buried in the aisle of St Thomas the Martyr, now called the Dunbar aisle, at the northern extremity of the transept of the cathedral, where his recumbent figure in episcopal robes may be seen to this day.

At length we come to a real and vivid personality in John of Winchester, *Clericus Regis*, who succeeded Bishop Dunbar in April 1437. He was an Englishman, as his name denotes, and he came to Scotland as one of the suite of King James I., when that unfortunate prince returned from his dreary nineteen years' captivity in England in 1424. His favour with the king stood him in good stead. He was successively appointed Prebendary of Dunkeld, Provost of Lincluden, and finally Lord Clerk-Register. James trusted and confided in him as he trusted and confided in few men. He employed him in numerous and weighty affairs of State. He visited him in his Castle of Spynie. Nor did the bishop's influence cease when the unfortunate king fell beneath the daggers of Sir Robert Graham and his followers in the Blackfriars' Monastery at Perth in 1437. During the minority of his son, James II., he was trusted with various embassies to England. He died in 1458, after a longer tenure of office than almost any of his predecessors, and was buried in the St Mary's aisle of the cathedral. It is recorded that during his incumbency the lands pertaining to the church were erected into the barony of Spynie with full right of regality and the little village of the

same name that had grown up beneath the castle walls was erected into a burgh. The temporal influence of the bishops of Moray was growing even more luxuriantly than their spiritual.

From this time forward till the suppression of Roman Catholicism in the middle of the sixteenth century, we find the bishops of Moray occupying a place amongst the greatest in the land. There is hardly one of them who did not combine the functions of the politician with those of the cleric to his own personal advantage, and in a lesser degree to the exaltation of his office, though not always to the interests of his diocese. Lords High Treasurer, Lords Clerk-Register, Keepers of the Privy Seal, Ambassadors,—we shall find instances of them all in the bishops that are to come. After the Reformation the bishops sank into mere spiritual chief magistrates. During at least the last century and more of the four hundred and fifty years when Roman Catholicism was the religion of the kingdom they were princes, not only of the Church, but also of the State.

That the bishopric of Moray was one of the great prizes of the Church is shown by the men who held it. With few exceptions they belonged to the great governing families either of the district or of the realm. Representatives of the Douglasses, Inneses, Dunbars, Hepburns, and others are to be found among them. Nor was royalty itself indisposed to find in its cathedral seat a comfortable provision for relatives or connections of its own. The register of the diocese includes the name of four Stewarts who were either allied to or offshoots from the royal family of Scotland.

James Stewart, the first of the four, is said to have belonged to the family of the Stewarts of Lorn. The connection of that family with the royal Stewarts was as follows: Alexander, fourth High Steward of Scotland, and Regent in the minority

of Alexander III., had as second son Sir John, who married the heiress of Bonkyll. His eldest son, Sir James of Per-sham, had as third son Sir Robert of Maormeath, whose eldest son, Sir John, married the heiress of Lorn. The eldest son of this marriage was also a Sir Robert, and it is probable that one of his sons was James Stewart, Bishop of Moray. Bishop James Stewart held the see for only two years. He was succeeded in 1461 by David, who is said to have been his brother, and who, as the builder of the great tower of the Palace of Spynie, bulks more largely in modern eyes than almost any other of these medieval prelates.

Bishop "Davie" is a man of whom we would gladly have known more. His troubles with the Earl of Huntly have been already referred to. For some offence, probably connected with the non-payment of certain dues claimed by the Church, Huntly had incurred ecclesiastical censure; and if there were no reprisals, there were at any rate threats in abundance. But the power of the Church was even greater than that of the king's lieutenant-general, and the earl had to yield. With bare head and bended knee he made his submission to the bishop in the Cathedral of Elgin on 20th May 1464, obtained absolution, and received the kiss of peace,—not, however, it may well be believed, without paying heavily for the privilege. Bishop David Stewart died in 1475, and was buried beside his brother in the aisle of St Peter and St Paul in the south transept of the cathedral. His antagonist the Earl of Huntly, who predeceased him by five years, lies not a stone's throw off under the east window of the Gordon aisle, where are buried so many generations of that powerful family.

The next bishop, William Tulloch, who was translated from Orkney to Moray in 1477, was Keeper of the Privy Seal, and seems to have been much more of a politician

than a cleric. He was one of the ambassadors sent to Denmark in 1468 to negotiate the marriage between the king, James III., and "the Ladey Margarett, eldest daughter to Christierne, first of that name, K. of Denmark and Nouruay and Suethland"—an alliance which first placed the Orkney and Shetland Islands in the possession of the Scottish Crown. He died in 1482.

After him comes another scion of royalty, Andrew Stewart, third son of the Black Knight of Lorn by Jane Beaufort, widow of King James I. But beyond the facts that he was consecrated in 1482 and died in 1501, nothing is known about him.

Andrew Forman, who followed him, however, was one of the most remarkable men of his day. Shrewd, supple, fertile in resource, with an argument ready for every emergency, not too painfully scrupulous when it was necessary to make concessions to the frailties of our imperfect nature, a perfect believer in expediency, with an unerring perception of where his own interest lay, and with a deep-rooted confidence in himself, despite a hot temper and a brusque manner, he rose to high place and preferment by sheer dint of character and mother wit. He was in the fullest sense of the word the architect of his own fortunes. He was no aristocrat though he came of gentle birth, being descended, according to Keith, from the Formans of Hatton, a respectable Berwickshire family. But he owed nothing to his connections. Without influence, acting and thinking independently—and perhaps in some cases only for himself—he stands forward as one of the most accomplished and successful diplomatists of his age.

We first hear of him as Protonotary Apostolic in Scotland in the year 1499. Two years after that he was postulated to the see of Moray, and in that capacity was one of the

commissioners sent to England to negotiate a marriage between King James IV. and Margaret, Henry VII.'s eldest daughter, and at a later date to arrange the terms of the treaty of peace between the two nations, necessitated by that event. In the same year he was put in full possession of the bishopric, holding at the same time *in commendam* the priories of Pittenweem in Scotland and Cottingham in England. Another friendly embassy to England followed in 1510. By this time, however, the clouds were gathering. Henry VIII.'s relations with his "dearest brother of Scotland" were becoming strained in consequence of the importunate demands made upon him in connection with certain jewels and monies claimed by his sister Margaret which Henry declined to surrender, and latterly he had shown himself disposed to interfere in Scottish politics in a way more active than pleasant.

Under these circumstances it was thought advisable by James IV.'s advisers to renew and confirm the ancient league and alliance between France and Scotland, which diplomatic courtesy always affected to believe had existed ever since the time of King Achaius (Eochaig, son of Aeda Fin, King of Dalriada), who, though he lived a century before his day, was said to have been the ally of Charlemagne. Forman was sent to France to work out the details of the treaty. He was eminently successful. The league was not only renewed, but the full rights of citizenship were conceded to natives of Scotland in France, and to natives of France in Scotland. Henceforward it was to be a union not only of hearts but of interests, private as well as political. It was a great concession for the most civilised nation in Christendom to make to what was then one of the rudest, especially when we remember how jealously France confined her privileges to her own free-born children. Naturally the



price that Scotland was called on to pay for it was proportionate. It was nothing less than the invasion of England.

From France Forman went on to Rome, where he was received by Pope Julius II. with distinguished favour. And it was not long before he found the opportunity of doing the Pope a signal service. For some time past differences had existed between the French and Papal Courts. These had now attained to such a height that both sovereigns had taken the field, and there seemed no other mode of determining them than by the arbitrament of war. Forman begged and obtained the Pope's assent to try the effect of mediation. The result was another triumph for his diplomacy. Each side dismissed its forces, and at a personal interview which followed between the French king and the Pope, "all matters debateable betwixt them" were arranged. In return for his services Julius appointed Forman Papal legate for Scotland.

It is in connection with this fortunate visit to Rome that Pitscottie tells a story which has been repeatedly adduced as evidence of Bishop Forman's ignorance of Latin, though it would rather appear to be proof of his want of knowledge of foreign customs. "Then this bischope maid ane banquet to the Pope and all his cardinallis, in on of the Pope's awin palaces, and when they war all sett according to thair custome, that he who ought the hous for the tyme should say the grace; and he was not ane guid scholler, nor had not guid Latine, but begane rudlie in the Scottise faschioun saying Benedicite, believand that they schould have said Dominus, bot they answeired, Deus in the Italian faschione, quhilk pat the bischope by his intendment that he wist not weill how to proceid fordward, bot happened, in guid Scottis in this manner, 'The divill I give you all false cardinallis to, in

nomine Patris, Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, Amen.' Then all the bischope's men leugh, and al the cardinallis thamselffis ; and the Pope inquyred quhairat they leugh, and the bischop schew that he was not ane guid clark, and that his cardinallis had put him by his text and intendment, thairfoir he gave thame all to the devill in guid Scottis, quhairat the Pope himself leugh verrie earnestlie."

The return which in his turn the French king felt constrained to make for the Scottish bishop's good offices followed not long after. As the bishop was on his way back to Scotland in the early summer of 1513 the archbishopric of Bruges became vacant. Louis, after having unsuccessfully supported another candidate, preferred a claim on Forman's behalf, basing his nomination not on what Forman had done for him personally, but on the services he had conferred on religion by inducing his master James IV. to declare war against the arch-heretic of England. Louis's letter to the Chapter is dated the 7th August ; and on the 22d of the same month James crossed the Border. Little was it then foreseen that in less than three weeks from that time the campaign would be at an end, and the brave but misguided James, with all his chivalry, lying lifeless on the fatal field of Flodden.

This disastrous event made no difference in Forman's fortunes. He was appointed to the office, and on the 13th November he made his solemn entry into Bruges. The nature of his reception, however, soon made him sensible that his appointment was not a popular one. Nor did things improve as time went on. The death of his patron, Pope Julius II., made matters still more difficult. Accordingly, when in 1514 Leo X., coveting the archbishopric for his nephew, Cardinal Abo, proposed that he should exchange it for St Andrews, which had become vacant by the death of

the Scottish primate at Flodden, Forman eagerly jumped at the proposal. Leo issued a bull appointing him to the office, and Forman, though he must have known that this was *ultra vires* of his Holiness, discovered that he had no conscientious scruples in accepting it. There was some clamour, of course. The Chapter, rightly resenting the Pope's interference, placed obstacles in the way. But through the good offices of Louis of France and the Regent Albany matters were ultimately arranged. Forman was inducted, and held the see for eight years. He died in 1522, and was buried at Dunfermline.

During the incumbency of his successor, James Hepburn, third son of Adam, Lord Hailes, and brother of Patrick, first Earl of Bothwell (1516-1524), the bishopric appears to have reached its utmost height of wealth and magnificence.

Seventy years of steady and continuous work had been required to make good the structural injury to the cathedral caused by the Wolf of Badenoch in 1390. When this was accomplished there yet remained much to be done in the way of embellishment and decoration. Each succeeding bishop strove to outvie his predecessor in adding something to its glory and its splendour. In Bishop Spynie's time the cathedral tower was begun; in Bishop Columba de Dunbar's (1422-1435), the large Alpha window was inserted in the western gable, and to the same period is referable the exquisite carving of the western doorway; Bishop David Stewart in 1462 restored the chapter-house, and dedicated it to the Passion. In 1507, the central tower having fallen, Bishop Forman began its re-erection on a still more magnificent scale. Though it was not completed till 1538, during the incumbency of the last Roman Catholic Bishop of Moray, the credit of the work is due to its originator. By the pious labours of these successive prelates the Cathedral

of Elgin had become not only the largest but the most splendid specimen of ecclesiastical architecture in the north of Scotland.

It was built in the orthodox form of a Jerusalem or Passion cross ; its length from east to west over walls is 282 feet ; and it consisted of—

1. A choir, 100 feet long by 70 broad, terminating in a rich gable with octagonal turrets at its angles, pierced by two tiers of five lancet lights and a large rose-window (locally called the Omega window) above. It was divided into three aisles for five bays (or 80 feet) of its length. The remaining portion of 80 feet, which was screened off from the rest, was one-aisled only, and at its extremity was the site of the high altar,<sup>1</sup> approached by a short flight of wide and spacious steps. Three bays of the southern aisle were known by the name of St Mary's (now more commonly called the Gordon) aisle : in one bay of the northern aisle was also a small chapel, where masses were long wont to be sung for the soul of Thomas Randolph, first feudal Earl of Moray.

2. A transept, 90 feet long by 25 broad, consisting of a single aisle supported by four massive columns. Its north end went originally by the name of the aisle of St Thomas the Martyr ; but it is now better known by that of the Dunbar aisle, as being the burial-place of so many of that distinguished family. The corresponding end of the southern extremity was dedicated to St Peter and St Paul. The doorway in this southern gable is of exceptional interest, from the bold character of its dog-tooth ornamentations. At the crossing of the nave and transept roofs rose the

<sup>1</sup> The site of the high altar is now occupied by a monument erected in 1868 to the memory of the Rev. Lachlan Shaw, the historian of Moray, one of the collegiate ministers of Elgin from 1734 to 1777, who is buried somewhere near the spot.

great tower. This tower fell twice—first in 1506, and again in 1711. After the first fall it was rebuilt, as has been already mentioned, by Bishop Forman and his successors. It was square in form, with side-lights in each face and a corner turret at the north-west angle, and was topped with a lofty steeple. Its height is believed to have been 198 feet. After its second fall it was not restored.

3. A nave. Excluding the western porch, its length is exactly 100 feet and its breadth 60. It is five-aisled, with a porch at the extremity of its northern and southern sides respectively. Its plan is unique, or nearly so, in Great Britain. The five aisles are separated by rows of slender clustered columns, which must have added immensely to its effect, by giving it an appearance of unusual width and lightness. The grand entrance to the cathedral was by the western door. The exterior carving of this porch is of the richest description. Above it was the great window locally known as the Alpha window, and this was flanked by two massive square towers 84 feet in height.

4. The chapter-house occupies its proper place to the north-west of the building. As the ground-plan of every cathedral is intended to represent a cross, so the shape and position of the chapter-house are designed to represent the drooping head of our crucified Saviour. It is octagonal in construction, is 37 feet broad and 34 feet high, and is supported by a clustered shaft with elaborately carved capitals 9 feet in circumference supporting the central groining of the roof. Stone seats surround the walls—one for each of the grave dignitaries who formed the Chapter. That of the dean, its head, is more elevated than the rest. It is the most richly decorated part of the whole structure, and is lighted by seven windows of great beauty. The chapter-house is attached to the choir by a small vestibule, off which is the

small chamber containing what seems to have been a piscina, locally known by the name of the Lavatory, in connection with which an interesting story is told.

In the early part of the eighteenth century there lived at Drainie a young woman of remarkable beauty of the name of Marjory Gilzean. In 1745 she married, against the wishes of her parents, who occupied a respectable position in life, a soldier of the name of Anderson, a native of the neighbouring village of Lhanbryde, and left the country with him. Three years later she reappeared in Elgin carrying an infant in her arms, her beauty all gone and her mind unhinged by trouble and the privations incident to the hard life of a soldier's wife. Her husband was dead ; her parents were either dead or would have nothing to do with her. Homeless, friendless, and penniless, she could find no other shelter than the ruins of the cathedral. The Lavatory was then in good repair, and here she took up her quarters, cradling her child in the piscina and depending on charity for the support of herself and her son. When the boy was old enough he was sent to school as a pauper—that is to say, a boy who in return for his education cleaned out the schoolroom and performed whatever other menial duties might be required of him. His schooling finished, he was apprenticed to an uncle—a stay-maker in his father's village of Lhanbryde. But he was badly used, and in the end he ran away. Finding his way to London, he enlisted in a regiment under orders for India. His good conduct, his indomitable perseverance, and his aptitude in acquiring a knowledge of the oriental languages, soon brought him promotion. Having amassed considerable wealth, he retired from the army with the rank of major-general ; and after living some years in Elgin, died in London in 1824, leaving his whole fortune—about £70,000—to build and endow the “Elgin Institution for

the education of youth and support of old age"—the richest and most useful charity in the county.

Outside the precinct wall of the cathedral was an irregular quadrilateral area, surrounded by a wall 12 feet high. Its circumference is said to have been 900 yards; but it was probably considerably greater, for it is difficult to see how within such circumscribed limits there was room for the large number of ecclesiastical buildings which it certainly contained. This area was called the Collegium. Here stood the manses and gardens of the twenty-four canons—the bishop's town-house being counted as one of them,—and the lodgings of the vicars and inferior clergy. A paved causeway ran in front of them, and in the circuit wall were five gates, each defended by a portcullis. Until the beginning of the present century a large portion of this wall remained, and, with a little trouble and investigation, its boundaries might have been easily delineated. Nowadays its correct limits must be largely matter of conjecture.

Few places have suffered more from modern neglect than the old and venerable College of Elgin. Of its circuit wall there exist but two fragments—one a shapeless block of decayed masonry in a field within the grounds of the house now called the South College; the other attached to the only one of the ports which still remains. This port is known by the name of the Pann's Port, from *pannis* or *pannagium*, a Low Latin word signifying the meadow-land outside it. It was the eastern gate of the college, and is, fortunately, in a fair state of preservation. It is in the form of a Gothic arch. The grooves in which the chains of its portcullis slid are still distinctly visible.

Persons but recently deceased could remember when there were four of these old manses existing—the dean's, the archdeacon's, and those of the prebendaries of Duffus and

Unthank. Now the first two alone remain. They have been converted into modern residences, and go by the name of the North and South College respectively. But for their massive walls and a certain air of gravity which seems to cling around them, one might almost be inclined to doubt their venerable antiquity, so much has their appearance been altered by modern improvements. The two others have long since been levelled to the ground; but their position is ascertained, and drawings of them are to be found in Rhind's 'Sketches of Moray.'

The situation of the remainder of the manses within the college cannot be stated with absolute accuracy. Six of them, we know, stood within what are now the grounds of the North College. These were the dean's, the treasurer's, and the manses of Bodtery, Inverkeithny, and Croy. Spynie manse occupied the site of a little old house set back from the street, with a small courtyard in front, adjoining Unthank manse, at the foot of North College Street. Advie manse stood where Advie House now stands in South College Street; and Moy manse was in the immediate vicinity. The vicar of Elgin had his official residence within what are now the grounds of Grant Lodge. And here also was the bishop's manse or town-house.

The builder of this residence is supposed to have been Bishop John Innes, and the date of its erection about 1407; but its south wing, as a stone turret upon it seems to indicate, was erected by Bishop Patrick Hepburn in 1557. Judging from its size, it can never have been intended to be more than a mere temporary lodging for the bishop, when his presence on the spot was required in connection with the business of the diocese or the great festivals of the Church. It was for long the residence of Alexander Seton, who was Commendator of Pluscarden after the Reformation, and Pro-



vost of Elgin for a considerable period. When he was made a peer by the title of Earl of Dunfermline, it acquired the name of Dunfermline House. It ultimately came into the possession of the Seafeld family, and was gifted to the town in 1885 by Caroline, Countess-Dowager of Seafeld.

Among the dignitaries who occupied these manses there was much diversity both of rank and of duties.

The Dean (*decanus*) was the head of the Chapter, and had the greatest responsibility. All the canons, vicars, and chaplains connected with the cathedral were under his control. To determine all causes relating to the Chapter, to punish the delinquencies of the vicars and clerics, to instal the canons, to conduct the services of the church and to give the benediction in the absence of the bishop, to inspect, and if need be to correct, any irregularities in the books, vestments, and ornaments of the prebendal churches, were among his manifold duties. In return for this he was entitled to an honour and a reverence which were awarded to none of the other dignitaries of the Chapter. All members of the choir, great and small, were enjoined to bow to him in his stall as they entered or left the church. Without his leave no member of the choir was to absent himself from the precinct even for a single night. When he entered or passed through the choir or chapter-house every one was to rise to his feet. Matins and vespers were not to begin until he was seated in his stall, or had sent a message that he did not intend to be present. And the same rule was to be observed with the sprinkling of holy water, and with the procession and collect in Lent at compline.

Next to the dean in capitular rank came the Archdeacon (*archidiaconus*). In old charters and local records he is sometimes, though improperly, called the Archdean—a term, according to Professor Cosmo Innes, in all probability derived

from "Arsdene" or "Ers-dene," which was the vernacular form of the word.<sup>1</sup>

The special function of the archdeacon was to administer the whole jurisdiction of the bishop, and he was by law as well as by practice the judge in the episcopal court. In a diocese where the business was heavy, as in Moray, he had the right of delegating his legal duties to a deputy who went by the name of the Official.

The Chanter or Precentor, though of less exalted position, was quite as useful an official within his own peculiar sphere. To him was intrusted the superintendence of the whole musical services of the cathedral. He had to admit and to instruct the choir, and to keep them in order; to correct the music-books, and to see that they were properly bound. The "sang schules" over which such officials presided, often, and indeed as a rule, did more than afford a mere musical education to their scholars. Many of them at the Reformation were converted into the grammar-schools of their respective burghs.

The duties of the Chancellor were bewilderingly multifarious. He was rector of the theological school—in other words, the head of the ecclesiastical training college. The preaching in the cathedral also was under his charge. It was his particular province to see that nothing approaching heterodoxy should be promulgated from the pulpit. He was at times to preach to the choir, at others to the Chapter, and on certain great festivals of the Church to the people. He was to correct the books containing the legends of the saints and to see to their binding. He was to look after the readers and servants. He

<sup>1</sup> The only one of the archdeacons of Moray who rose to any distinction was John Bellenden, who by command of King James V. translated Boece's 'History of Scotland' from Latin into the vernacular. It was published in 1541. In the title-page he is designated as "Archdene of Murray." He is termed by Sir David Lyndsay "a cunning clerk that writeth craftily."

was to have the custody of the Chapter seal, and to see it safely locked up in the treasury under double locks. He was to write the letters and draw up the charters of the Chapter, and to have the supervision of the theological library. His importance may be estimated by the multitude of his functions.

To the Treasurer belonged the care of the ornaments, the relics, and the other treasures of the cathedral; the keeping in order of the clocks; the providing of the Communion elements; of the lights, wine, coals, incense, and the necessary utensils of the church; the supply of straw for the chapter floor and of rushes at the great festivals; the providing of mats for the choir and in front of the various altars; the payment of the wages of the church servants, *et multa alia que longum est enarrare*.

Each of these chief dignitaries had his deputy. There was a sub-dean, a sub-chancellor, a sub-chanter, and so on. Very probably the care of his deputy was not the least onerous of a dignified cleric's duties.

But if their functions were heavy, their emoluments were great. The revenues enjoyed by the various members of the Chapter were derived from two sources—from the profits accruing to them from the lands in which they were invested in virtue of their offices, and from certain pecuniary payments due to them in respect of the discharge of their ecclesiastical functions. The one was called their temporality, the other their spirituality. Their income from the land was payable partly in money, partly in kind. Hence the difficulty—one might almost say the impossibility—of conveying to the modern reader anything like an accurate idea in pounds, shillings, and pence of the actual value of their benefices, from whatsoever source derived. But something like an approximate notion may be obtained.

Beginning with the bishop, who of course was the most

highly remunerated member of the Chapter, the first point to be ascertained is how the bishopric of Moray stood as regarded emoluments in relation to the other bishoprics of Scotland. In 1256 it stood fourth. In a *taxatio* or valuation of that year preserved in the 'Registrum Aberdonense,' the relative values of the principal sees are given as follows :—

1. St Andrews	.	.	.	.	£8023
2. Glasgow	.	.	.	.	4080
3. Aberdeen	.	.	.	.	1611
4. Moray	.	.	.	.	1418

These figures, however, give us no idea of the actual income of the bishop. They show only the net sum on which the various bishoprics were liable to be assessed.

One might not unreasonably suppose that in the Chartulary, which is such a mine of information as to everything relating to the diocese, we would find data that would enable us to arrive at a satisfactory estimate of the bishop's income, at least at some period of the bishopric's existence. But this is not the case. There are, indeed, certain documents—apparently, from the character of their handwriting, of the end of the thirteenth century—which bear upon the subject. But they do nothing more than enlighten us as to particular items of his revenue.

The first of these is a return seemingly prepared for the purpose of estimating the rents due to him from the four deaneries of the diocese—Elgin, Inverness, Strathspey, and Strathbogie. The Dean of Elgin was the only one of these four dignitaries who had a seat in the Chapter. The others were rural deans only, whose jurisdiction over the clergy of their respective districts was "made up of a delegation of the general pastoral authority of the bishop and of the jurisdiction of the archdeacon." What the exact nature of their functions was we need not here stop to inquire. No doubt within his

own district every rural dean was a dignitary of very considerable importance. But whatever he may have been, the document now under consideration shows that he had to pay pretty smartly for his position. The bishop's share of his emoluments was a tenth ; and the result was as follows :—

	Valuation.	Bishop's tithe.
Deanery of Elgin . . .	£338 16 0	£33 16 0
Deanery of Inverness . .	273 0 0	27 6 4
Deanery of Strathspey . .	150 0 0	14 19 8
Deanery of Strathbogie . .	146 0 0	16 12 0
		<hr/> £92 14 0

The return which follows gives the amount of the procurations due to the bishop. Each church in the deanery was taxed in a certain sum for the purpose of entertaining the bishop in his annual visitations. This was called a procuration. The amount levied on the four deaneries came to about £8.

Another return gives the amount of the synodical dues payable to the bishop ; but these only came to a small sum yearly, apparently to little more than £4.

The only other paper in the register which throws any light upon the matter is the rental prepared by Master Archibald Lyndesay, the chamberlain, in 1561. It shows the value of the temporality of the bishop at a time when it had reached its apogee of wealth and magnificence. At this date the bishop was lord of no less than nine baronies—Spynie, Kinneddar, Birnie, Rafford, Ardclach, Keith, Kilmyles, Strathspey, and Moymore, in the four shires of Inverness, Elgin, Nairn, and Banff. Every feu-duty, every mart, mutton, lamb, capon, dozen of poultry, boll of oats and barley, all multures, grassums, rights of service, upkeep of mills—in short, every return in labour, money, or kind which he could claim from

his tenants, is set forth in this elaborate document. The result, after deducting what was actually expended by the bishop himself, was as follows :—

1. The “haill ferme and teind victualls” of the bishopric amounted to 77 chalders, 6 bolls, 3 firlots, and 2 pecks, with 10 bolls of wheat. It is noted that “in tymes bypast” these had been much greater, “extending to fourscore and fourteen chalders or thairby”; but inundations, “the sanding of the lands by watteris,” and “the wound and povertie of tennentis and truble of this tyme,” had reduced the return to the sum above stated.

2. Money, “the salmond comptit thairwith,” £2633, 7s. 3½d. As for the “procurations and synodals,” which could formerly be computed at £80 a-year, nothing had been got from them for three years past.

In addition to the various sources of revenue above mentioned the bishop had at least another. The fruits of certain churches and parishes were appropriated to his special maintenance. From these he derived what would now be called his table-allowance. It was in keeping with his state. The mensal churches of the bishopric of Moray were no fewer than twelve in number, and consisted of the churches of Elgin, St Andrews, Dyke, Ugstoun, Rothemaye, Keith, Grantully, Dulbatelauch or Wardlaw, Rothiemurcus, Davit, Tallarcie, and Inverallan.

The incomes of the other canons were on the same magnificent scale. The sources, too, were similar. In a greater or less degree each had his tithes, his “maills and duties,” his payments in money and in kind, his Easter offerings, his dues on marriages, baptisms, and funerals—these last the heaviest and most oppressive of all. Certain churches, too, known as common churches, were assigned to provide a general table-allowance for the Chapter. They are stated to have been—

Artendol, Ferneway, Aberihacyn, Logykenny, Kyncardin, Abirnethy, Altre, Ewain, Brennath. Some of these are recognisable under their modern names; others can only be guessed at. In addition to his manse and garden within the collegium, each had also his "croft" outside the precinct walls. These crofts varied in size, probably according to the rank of the dignitary, from 2 to 4 acres, and embraced in all, perhaps, some 50 or 60 acres. The names of places in the vicinity of Elgin still preserve their memory. The lands of Dean's Haugh were part of the croft of the dean; Moycroft was that of the parson of Moy; a "tail" of land now within the grounds of South College is still known as the Sub-Chanter's Croft; and so on.

From a collation of the original records of the valuation of 1561, the late learned editor of the 'Registrum Moraviense,' Professor Cosmo Innes, who was himself Sheriff of Moray, has given details of the values of the prebends of the various members of the Chapter, so far as this was possible from his imperfect materials. These we may thus abridge:—

The dean had in victual 31 chalders, 5 bolls, 1 firloft, and 3 pecks; of kain wedders 110; of kain oats, 6 bolls; of capons, 24. From the sale of his marts he derived 26s. 8d. The value of his teinds "sett for money" was £114, 13s. 4d.; that of "the temporal landis mailis" £14, os. 10d.

The full particulars of the sub-dean's income do not seem to have been available; but he had for the parsonage of Dollas 5 chalders, 2 bolls, and 3 firlots of victual, and the altarage of Auldearn brought him in £40 more.

The chanter had 18 chalders of victual and 180 merks of money.

The rental of the chancellor of Moray (only a portion, it must be kept in view, of the chancellor's revenue) was £100.

That of the archdeacon was £146, 13s. 4d.

The sub-chanter had 335 merks from the profits of the kirk of Rafford, and £40 from that of Ardlach.

The prebend of the parson of Duffus was valued at 16 chalders of victual and £152, 10s. of money; that of Moy at 80 merks; that of Kinnoir at £100; Advie and Cromdale at 40 merks; Rhynie at 80 merks; Kingussie at £80; Dipple at £98, 3s. 4d. and 2 chalders 4 bolls of victual; Spynie at 200 merks; the vicarage of Elgin at 2 chalders of victual only, "the resoun thair is na payment maid nothir of woll, lamb, nor utheris dewties payit to vicaris in tymes bypast, quhilk had wont to be sett in assedatioun for four score merkis."

We need not pursue the subject further. Nor, indeed, beyond a few fragmentary notices of special endowments to this or that parsonage or chaplainry, has the Chartulary much more to tell. Sufficient, however, has been said to show that, taking into account the poverty of the country generally and the immense difference between the purchasing power of money in those days and in our own, Mother Church at the end of the sixteenth century was no *injusta noverca* to her secular children.

After the death of Bishop James Hepburn, Robert Schaw, a son of the Laird of Sauchie, in Stirlingshire, succeeded him. He was "a man of great virtue," and perhaps for that very reason has left behind him no history worth recording. He held the see for three years only—from 1524 to 1527.

His successor, Alexander Stewart, was the son of Alexander, Duke of Albany, younger brother of King James III., and of Catherine Sinclair, daughter of William, Earl of Caithness and Orkney. Albany having divorced his wife on the convenient ground of propinquity, in order to marry Cecilia, the daughter of Edward IV., and thus to secure the English king's aid in his treasonable designs upon the Scottish crown, his son



was rendered illegitimate. Albany's ambition was frustrated. He neither succeeded in marrying the princess nor in becoming king of Scotland. But his cruel conduct towards his wife clouded his son's whole future life, and forced him to adopt the Church as a profession. In due time he became Prior of Whitherne, Abbot of Inchaffray, and Abbot of Scone *in commendam*. Finally, in 1527 he was promoted to the see of Moray, and died in 1534.

Patrick Hepburn, the next Bishop of Moray, and the last Roman Catholic holder of the see, was a man of a very different type. He was the son of Patrick, first Earl of Bothwell, and consequently nephew of his predecessor in the see, Bishop James Hepburn. He succeeded his uncle John, by whom he had been educated, as Prior of St Andrews in 1522; he was secretary from 1524 to 1527; in 1535 he was promoted to the see of Moray, and he afterwards received the rich abbacy of Scone *in commendam*. All his family had been clever men, and in talents he took after his family. He was one of the commissioners who negotiated the marriage of Mary Stewart with Francis, the Dauphin of France, though he was not one of those who assisted at its celebration. But his licentious life and the gross obscenity of his manners and conversation have marred his reputation. History and tradition have handed him down to us as not only the last but the worst of the old bishops of Moray. The memory of his irregular life still survives in the district. No doubt many of these tales are exaggerated, and there is no need to repeat them here. But authentic history records that he had at any rate ten illegitimate children by four different mothers, and all these he managed to provide for at the expense of the Church. In truth he was the greatest dilapidator of Church possessions that the bishopric had ever known. Wise in his generation, he saw that the Reformation was not a thing to be opposed,

by spiritual weapons at any rate ; and he had been but a short time in possession of the see when he began a system of alienation of the Church lands, in order to provide for his own future maintenance and that of his numerous family. The feu-charters and assedations granted by him occupy many pages of the Chartulary, and as the most were granted to the surrounding proprietors on easy terms, he was able, when the storm did burst, not only to brave but to defy the Reformation. It was of little consequence to him that the General Assembly deprived him of his spirituality. So long as they were unable to take his temporality from him, he cared not a whit. And that they were never able to do. Shutting himself up in his palace of Spynie, he carried on his wild, merry, unprincipled life to the end, and died there—not, however, in the odour of sanctity—on the 20th June 1573.

The year 1560 had seen the triumph of the Congregation. Mary of Guise, who had latterly been the sole obstacle to its success, died on the 10th June. The Estates met in August ; and on the 17th they approved the Confession of Faith as containing the only “hailsome and sound doctrine, grounded upon the infallible truth of God’s Word.” This was followed up by Acts prohibiting any other form of belief or worship, and making the celebration or attendance at mass a highly criminal offence. “On the morning of the 25th of August 1560,” says Burton, “the Romish hierarchy was supreme : in the evening of the same day Calvinistic Protestantism was established in its stead.”

The change from Roman Catholicism to Protestantism in Moray was attended with none of the friction which might reasonably have been expected to ensue in a district which owed so much in the way of material advantage to the old religion. Nor was there any solution of continuity in the episcopal succession. Within two months after Bishop Hep-

burn's death his Protestant successor had been elected. The "licence" to the Chapter "to cheis a bishop of Moray" is dated the 12th August 1573; and the "consecration of the bishop" took place on the 5th February following. The person on whom the choice of the Chapter fell was George Douglas, a natural son of Archibald, Earl of Angus. He held the bishopric for sixteen years, and is buried in the chapel of Holyrood.

On his death in 1589 James VI. seized the opportunity to convert the bishopric into a temporal lordship. Alexander Lindsay, on whom the king conferred it in 1590 with the title of Lord Spynie, was a brother of Alexander, Earl of Crawford. He was an old and intimate friend and boon companion of the king. He had accompanied his master to Norway on his venturesome matrimonial expedition in quest of the King of Denmark's daughter, and there he had fallen ill. James proceeded to Denmark, leaving Lindsay behind. But he did not forget his sick comrade. To cheer him in his sickness, and to make up to him for all he had endured in his service, he wrote him a long gossip letter, in which he promised that on his return to Scotland he would, with the consent of Parliament, "erect you the temporality of Moray in a temporal lordship, with all honours thereto pertaining." "Let this," he adds, "serve for cure to your present disease;" and he dates this genial characteristic letter from the "Castell of Croneburg [Elsinore], quhair we are drinking and dryving our in the auld maner." This promise he religiously fulfilled.

The year 1592 saw the abolition of Episcopacy, and the establishment of Presbyterianism as the religion of the State. This condition of affairs, however, was of short continuance only. James's sufferings, when king of Scotland, at the hands of his Presbyterian masters, as they made

him feel that they were, had been too galling to engender in him any particular love either for them or for their doctrines. Accordingly, he was hardly seated on the English throne when he began to have grave and heart-searching doubts as to the orthodoxy of their teaching on such important subjects as his ecclesiastical supremacy and the Presbyterian form of Church government. Very soon he discovered that a Scottish Presbytery "as well agreeth with a monarchy as God and the Devil." From that moment his conscience would give him no rest until Episcopacy was revived. With characteristic impetuosity he set about the work at once. The story of his efforts to achieve his object—of his squabbles with the Presbyterian party, of his attempts to win over this or that of its leaders, of his disputations, public and private, of his wheedlings and coaxings and flatterings—is one of the most amusing chapters of our annals. He succeeded, of course. Presbyterianism was as yet a plant of too young and weakly a growth to be able to withstand the efforts of a king backed by all the bishops and clergy of the Church of England, and in due time it yielded to their united efforts. Episcopacy was restored in 1606. The king was delighted. His first care was to provide the new bishops with robes befitting their resuscitated dignity, and to fix their social position. He would have been glad if he could have stopped there, and let the bishops shift for themselves in finding the means to support their blushing honours; but that was out of the question. The new dignitaries gave him no peace until they had forced him to take in hand the difficult question himself, and in the end he was compelled to do so.

Among others, Alexander Douglas, the Bishop of Moray (1606-1623), applied to him for a restoration of his temporalities. James was forced to open negotiations with his

"dear Sandy." Lord Spynie had to make a virtue of necessity. He surrendered his lands for the sum the king offered him, though with a very bad grace. But being a sharp man of business, he refused to accept the royal obligation in the shape of his kingly word; he insisted on getting the bishop's bond also. Lord Spynie's death from the wounds sustained in a street brawl in 1607, between his nephew the Master of Crawford and the young Lord of Edzell, was the cause of much subsequent litigation over this edifying transaction. Spynie's representatives were obdurate; the poor bishop had nothing wherewith to pay; and it ended by the Crown having to satisfy the claim.

Bishop Douglas's successor was John Guthrie, minister of Edinburgh. The fifteen years during which he held the see (1623-1638) were years of trouble and confusion. James VI. was dead. The Covenanters were in arms against their king, Charles I., and their cause was distinctly prospering. At last in 1638 their triumph came. Guthrie, with others of his order, was cited to appear before the General Assembly that met at Glasgow in the autumn of 1638, to answer to crimes and misdemeanours, not one out of ten of which had any foundation save in the imagination of their enemies. From the 'Letters of Robert Baillie,' who was one of his judges, and not one of the most bigoted, we learn what the charges were against Guthrie. "Moray," he writes, "had all the ordinary faults of a bishop, besides his boldness to be the first to put on his sleeves in Edinburgh"—in other words, to wear the proper dress of his order. For these offences he was deposed. More fortunate than some of his brethren, he was "not at this tyme excommunicat." He continued the even tenor of his ways, teaching and preaching with exemplary assiduity just as if no such sentence had been pronounced against him, and living a quiet domestic life with his wife and

family in the castle of Spynie. Foreseeing the troubles that were likely to ensue, he had six months previously taken care to "furnish it with all necessary provisioun, men and meit, ammvnition, pudder and ball." But nothing was further from the bishop's intentions than actual resistance. The leaders of the Tables, however, thought differently. Accordingly in July 1640 they directed General Monro "to take order" with the redoubtable old churchman. "Therevpon," says Spalding, "Monro resolves to go to sie the bischop and the hous of Spynnies. He takis 300 mvskiteiris with him, with puttaris and peicis of ordinance, with all vther thinges necessar, and leaves the rest of his regiment behind him lying at Strathbogie abyding his returne. Be the way, sindrie barronis and gentilmen of the countrie met him and convoyit him to Spynne. The bischop of Morray (by expectatioun of many) cumis furth of the place, and spak with Monro, and presentlie but more ado, vpone Thursdai 16th July, randeris the hous well furneshit with meit and mvnitioun. He deliveris the keyis to Monro, who with sum soldiouris enteris the houss, receavit good intertynnemint. Thairefter Monro mellis with the haill armes within the place, plunderit the bischopis ryding horss, sadill and bryddill; bot did no more iniury, nor vsit plundering of anything within or without the houss. He removit all except the bischop and his wyf, sum barnes and seruandis, whome he sufferit to remain vnder the gaird of ane capitane, ane livetenand, ane serjand and 24 mvskiteiris, whome he ordered to keep that houss, quhill forder ordour came from the Tables, and to leive vpon the rentis of the bischoprik, and onnawayes to truble the bischopis houshold provisioun, nor be burdenabill vnto him. Bot the bischop vsit the thrie commanderis most kyndlie, eiting at his owne table, and the soldiouris wes sustenit according to directioun forsaide. Monro haueing thus

gottin in this strong strenth by his expectatioun, with so litele panes, quhilk wes nather for scant nor want given ower, he returns bak agane to Strathbogie trivmphantlie."

In September Monro returned to Edinburgh, taking with him the Bishop of Moray, whom he brought a captive at his victorious chariot-wheels, "up the streitis and presentit him to the Estates," who "incontinent causit waird him in the tolbuith of Edinburgh, where he remaint with a havie hart" till November 1641, when he was released on bail. He retired to his native county of Forfar, and died there "in the time of the great rebellion," sometime before the restoration of Charles II.

The year 1641 saw the Covenant burned by the hand of the common hangman, and Episcopacy re-established for the last time. The first bishop under the new *régime* was Murdoch Mackenzie (1662-1677), who, according to Keith, was "descended from a younger son of the laird of Gairloch, the first branch of the family of Seaforth." It is very difficult to arrive at a proper estimate of his character, so hardly, and, as it seems, so uncharitably has this prelate been dealt with by the Covenanting writers of his time. The charge which has been most persistently pressed is that of an absorbing avarice. Wodrow, who is especially prejudiced against him, declaims as to his hypocrisy in preaching about the deceitfulness of riches "while he was drawing the money over the board to him." And Alexander Brodie of Brodie, one of the leading Covenanters in his diocese, expresses himself to the same effect.

Yet whatever his shortcomings may have been in this respect, there was much that was strong and attractive about him. His sturdy common-sense, his courage in giving expression to his own opinions even when he knew that these were in opposition to the views of the majority of his hearers, are

well exemplified in the proceedings of the General Assembly of 1656. An Act had been introduced "for promoting pietie." Mackenzie had the manliness to object to it. He did not see, he said, why masters of families or parents should be bound under high ecclesiastical pains and penalties to "explain, catechiz or scriptur" those under their charge. And if, he went on, in terror of the Act, they were so "impudent" as to say they had discharged their duties when in point of fact they had not, he could not understand why they should be censured, removed from office, or debarred the sacrament. The fault was not theirs. It was that of the Act or of the men who made it.

Wodrow tells an amusing story of Bishop Mackenzie in the days when he was the parish clergyman of Elgin. "As a minister," he says, "he was famous for searching people's kitchens on Christmas day for the superstitious goose, telling them the feathers of them would rise up in judgment against them one day." In due time, after sixteen years of Episcopal work in Moray, there comes the rumour that Mackenzie is to be translated to Orkney, which was not only a richer benefice, but was then, as now, famous for the excellence of its geese. Brodie, whom nothing could restrain from interfering in other people's affairs, must needs speak to the bishop on the subject. "I askd at him, if he wer to remov to a fatter benefice : Orkney was twice as good. He said, 'A goose was good, and the fatter the better.'" A man who could thus make good-humoured reference to a story against himself cannot have been altogether without good points. Robert Baillie describes him as a "bold, weel-spoken man." And even Brodie admits the strength of his personal influence over his flock, which went so far as to induce them to receive the communion kneeling. His kindness to a boat-load of poor Nonconformist prisoners taken at Bothwell Brig, who were



shipwrecked in Orkney on their voyage to the West Indian "plantations," to which they had been sentenced to be transported, is one of the most creditable and best remembered incidents of his career.

The truth seems to be that Bishop Mackenzie was a man much in advance of his time. He probably owed this to his history. His life had been full of changes and chances. We first hear of him as chaplain to the troops taken over to Germany by Lord Reay and the Baron of Fowlis to assist—not for conscience' sake only—Gustavus Adolphus in his crusade against Papacy known as the Thirty Years' War. From that he passed to a quiet country cure—that of Contin in Ross-shire. From Contin he was transferred to Inverness (1640-1645), and from there to Elgin. His elevation to the bishopric of Moray took place in 1662; in 1678 he was promoted to Orkney; and he died, according to Keith, at Kirkwall in 1688, the year of the Great Revolution.

James Aitkin, who succeeded him, was an Orcadian—the son of Henry Aitkin, sheriff and commissary of those islands. His education was begun at Edinburgh and finished at Oxford. He was chaplain to the Marquis of Hamilton while he was the king's commissioner to the General Assembly of 1638, and must have witnessed, and perhaps condemned, its treatment of the bishops. His next appointment was that of minister of Birsay, a parish on the mainland of Orkney; and Keith records that in that obscure sphere he won the general esteem of all classes. In 1650, when Montrose landed in Scotland on that last expedition of his, which ended in his defeat and capture before it could be said to have begun, Aitkin was deputed by his brethren of the Presbytery to draw up a declaration in their name expressing their loyalty to the Crown and their resolution to adhere to their allegiance. For this he and all the other signatories were

promptly deposed. Aitkin was excommunicated, and an order for his apprehension issued. He had, however, a friend at Court. His kinsman, Sir Archibald Primrose, was clerk to the Council, and gave him private notice of his danger. Aitkin, leaving his family behind him, fled to Holland, where he remained for the next three years. He returned to Scotland in 1653, and sending for his family, lived in hiding in Edinburgh, like so many others of his cloth, until the Restoration in 1660.

No sooner had the king got his own again than Aitkin emerged from his concealment. Thomas Sydserf, who had been Bishop of Galloway, was the only survivor of the old Scottish bishops. He at once went up to London to offer his congratulations to his restored king. Aitkin accompanied him. He was not yet of sufficient importance to be promoted to a bishopric, but his long devotion to the royal cause was not suffered to go unrewarded. He was presented by the Bishop of Winchester to the rectory of Winfirth in Dorsetshire, and in that pleasant seclusion he spent the next seventeen years of his life. In 1677 he was consecrated Bishop of Moray. Three years later he was translated to the see of Galloway. The vicissitudes of such a life would have been worth recording. Unfortunately no memoir of him exists.

The memory of none of the Protestant bishops is more cherished than that of Colin Falconar, who occupied the see from 1680 to 1686. He was a native of the district. His father, William Falconar, was proprietor of Downtuff, a small estate on the banks of the river Findhorn. His mother was Beatrice, daughter of Dunbar of Bogs,—now part of the Sanquhar estate near Forres,—and one of the many families of that name who claimed kinship with the old Dunbar Earls of Moray. The Falconars of Downtuff were cadets of the family of Falconar of Halkerton,—the ancestors of the Earls

of Kintore,—who were also proprietors of the lands of Lethen in Nairnshire. Hence on both sides Colin Falconar could claim connection with the landed gentry of the district.

His career is in striking contrast to that of his two immediate predecessors. Before his promotion to episcopal rank he had taken no further part in public business, nor seen any more of the world than was to be found in the path of a conscientious parish minister. His first charge was that of Essil in the Speymouth district; his next was that of Forres, where his arms, impaled with those of his wife, Lillias Rose, granddaughter of William Rose, eleventh Baron of Kilravock, are still to be seen on a stone built into the back wing of the Free Church manse of the town. As minister of Forres he also held the titular rank of Arch-deacon of Moray. But his first see was not that of the district where he had spent twenty-seven of the most useful and hard-working years of his life, but the wild, half-Highland diocese of Argyll. This appointment, however, he held for only a few months. In July 1680 he was translated to Moray, and died at Spynie on 11th November 1686 in the sixty-third year of his age. Personal piety and the blessed art of peacemaking were his principal characteristics. He is said to have healed more feuds among the landed gentry of the district than any other bishop of the diocese either before or after him.

With Colin Falconar the list of the Bishops of Moray may be said to have practically come to an end. There were, indeed, two bishops after him,—Alexander Rose, descended from the family of Kilravock, consecrated in March 1686; and William Hay, of the family of Park, a cadet of the old knightly family of Hays of Lochloy in Nairnshire, consecrated in February 1688. But the one was translated to Edinburgh after he had been little more than half a year

Bishop of Moray; and the other suffered the common fate of the order, and was ejected at the Revolution. The Errol MS.<sup>1</sup> describes Bishop Hay as a man "of very mild and gentle temper, willing neither to persecute Papists nor Presbyterians; so he neither approved of the rigour of penal laws against the one, nor allowed his clergy to vex the other. And they having once asked him, 'What, then, shall we do? for the schismatick preachers will prevail,' he said, 'Excel them in life and doctrine.'"

The Act finally abolishing Prelacy was passed in 1689, and with it Bishop Hay's episcopal functions ceased. He might perhaps have been allowed to continue in the incumbency of St Giles, the parish kirk of Elgin, if he had consented to pray for William and Mary by name. But this his conscience would not allow him to do, and in October of the same year he was deprived of his benefice. He retired to Inverness, and lived for sixteen years afterwards, a martyr to disease and ill-health. He died on 19th March 1707 in the sixtieth year of his age. A monument, which may possibly have been intended to adorn the walls of the old High Kirk there (replaced in 1770 by the present building), describes him as "a prelate of primitive piety and of the highest eloquence, and everywhere the faithful champion of the Church and of the royal dignity."

The bishopric of Moray lasted 581 years in all. During the whole of that long period its influence upon the district had been one distinctly for good. To it Moray owes almost everything—its high standard of civilisation, the growth of its towns, its unbroken peacefulness, all those memories and traditions which are its proudest inheritance. Until within very recent days Elgin had all the quiet, all the stateliness, all the amenity of a cathedral city. Little of

<sup>1</sup> Spalding Club Miscellany, vol. ii. p. 297.

that exists now. What alone distinguishes it from other provincial towns of Scotland is the ruins of its cathedral.

The sure and steady decadence of that once magnificent structure is a story as painful as it is discreditable. It reached its lowest depth in the beginning of the present century, when it was saved from utter dissolution by the pious efforts of an obscure cobbler. Its present ruined condition is due much more to the indifference of those whose duty it was to protect it, than to religious or political fanaticism, or to the vicissitudes of troublous times.

No doubt the storms of the Reformation had not suffered it to rest unscathed. In 1567 or 1568, during the regency of the Earl of Moray, the Privy Council issued an order in which, after stating that it was necessary that "provisioun be maid for the enterteining of the men of weir quhais services cannot be sparit," "it was appointed that the lead should be taken from the cathedral churches in Elgyne and Aberdeen, and sauld and disponit upon for sustentation of the said men of weir." Young, the annalist of Elgin, suggests with considerable probability that the spire of the great steeple and the steeples of the two western towers were made of wood, and that it was their leaden roofing which was removed. But removed some lead assuredly was, and this lead was sold and placed on board a ship to be conveyed to Holland. Tradition asserts that it never reached its destination. The ship, its crew, and its cargo were lost on the voyage, and the sacrilege was atoned.

In 1569, the political atmosphere being for the moment more serene, an attempt was made to repair the damage. The bishop and some of the canons intimated that they were willing to "pay ane ressonabill contributioun, for mending, theking, and reparaling of the Cathedrall Kirk of Moray"; and the Privy Council, never unwilling to countenance any

project of the kind so long as it was not to cost the national exchequer a farthing, accordingly published an edict directing the "Abbot of Kinloss, the Prior of Pluscarden, the Dean, Canons, Parsons, and Vicars and utheris beneficite men within the boundris of the said Diocie of Murray," to go and do likewise, under pain of being denounced rebels and put to the horn. But nothing came of it, notwithstanding the heavy penalty attached to disobedience of the order, and the gradual decay of the structure went on unchecked.

In 1637 the roof-tree of the choir was destroyed by a violent wind-storm. In 1640 Gilbert Ross, minister of Elgin, aided and abetted by the lairds of Innes and Brodie and others, all ardent Covenanters, without authority from presbytery or council, in an outburst of bigotry demolished the rich timber screen which separated the nave from the choir. It had survived the Reformation nearly "sevin scoir yearis," and its merits as a work of art might have saved it. In its very beauty these intemperate bigots 'probably detected a snare and a delusion. "On the wast syde," says Spalding, "wes painted in excellent culloris, illuminat with starris of bright gold, the crucefixing of our blessed Saueour Jesus Christ. This peice wes so excellentlie done, that the cullouris nor starris never faidit nor evanishit, bot keipit haill and sound as thay were at the beginning notwithstanding this college or channourie Kirk wantit the roof sen the reformation, and no haill wyndo thairintill to saif the same from storme, snaw, sleit, or weit, quhilk myself saw, and mervallous to consider. On the vther syde of this wall, towardis the east, wes drawin the day of judgement. Aluayes all is throwne down to the ground. It wes said this minister causit bring hame to his hous the tymber thair of, and burne for serving his keching and vther vses: bot ilk nicht the fyre went out that it wes burnt, and could

not be haldin in to kyndle the morning fyre as vse is; whairat the servandis and vtheris mervallit, and thairupone the minister left of and forboor to bring in or burne any more of that tymber in his hous. This wes markit, spred throw Elgyne, and crediblie reportit to myself."

In 1711, on Pace Sunday, the great tower fell. "It had probably," says Young, "been undermined by masons of the town removing stones from it." Some children and people had been walking about it in the morning, but it fell during breakfast-time and no one was hurt. For more than a century afterwards the ruins were used as a quarry; the precinct wall fell; the churchyard became overgrown with weeds, and littered with every kind of rubbish.

And so things continued till the year 1824, when a certain John Shanks, "an idle gossiping creature," who had been a "drouthy cobbler" in the High Street of Elgin, was for some services rendered to the winning party at a parliamentary election appointed to the keepership of the cathedral. He was a thin, lank, spider-like being, with a quiet earnest enthusiasm in his manner, who dressed habitually in a red Kilmarnock bonnet, short breeches, and rig-and-fur stockings,—"a sort of Old Mortality," says Billings, "whose delight it was to labour among ruins and tombs." No sooner was he appointed than he set vigorously to work to clear away the accumulated rubbish. With his own hands he removed nearly three thousand barrowfuls of litter. The Morayshire Farmers' Club, hearing of the good work he was doing, sent him horses and carts to carry away the sweepings. When he had finished his labours he had not only made the place tidy and approachable, but had laid bare the traces of its original plan, the elevations at the high altar, the stairs at the western gate, and discovered many tombs and ornaments buried deep within the waste. But, as

he said to Lord Cockburn, who made his acquaintance in 1838, "the rubbish made an auld man of me." He died on the 14th April 1841, aged eighty-three. A stone, now built into the precinct wall of the cathedral, bearing an epitaph written by Lord Cockburn, preserves, in language not one whit too strong, the memory of his pious work. "For seventeen years," it says, "he was the Keeper and the Shower of this Cathedral, and while not even the Crown was doing anything for its preservation, he with his own hands cleared it of many thousand cubic yards of rubbish, disclosing the bases of its pillars, collecting the carved fragments, and introducing some order and propriety. Whoso reverences the Cathedral will respect the memory of this man."

The Reformers had, on the whole, dealt gently with the cathedral. They had shown no desire to injure it except when the exigencies of the political situation rendered it necessary to take advantage of its riches. So long as nothing more than the abolition of Roman Catholicism was aimed at, so long as Prelacy should continue an institution of the State, the preservation of the cathedral as the chief church of the diocese was, if not an absolute necessity, at any rate in the highest degree expedient.

And it was the same with the other religious edifices within the bishopric, which belonged not to the secular clergy but to the regulars. They all ceased to exist, no doubt, as institutions, but the buildings themselves were uninjured. "The rooks were driven away, but their nests were not harried."

Of these establishments one of the most important was the Priory of Pluscarden. Six miles south-west of Elgin is an oval valley, or rather basin, completely surrounded by fir-clad hills. Those on the north are called the Heldon, those on the south the Kellas, hills. A little stream—the Lochty or Black Burn—runs through it from end to end. The soil is



fertile, the air is pure, the surroundings in the highest degree attractive. The first things the traveller observes as he enters this peaceful valley are the ruined tower and sharp roofless gable of what has evidently been an important religious edifice. The rest of the building is invisible, concealed under a rich growth of dark ivy, or screened from sight by the thick foliage of magnificent old trees. This valley is what was known in medieval days as the vale of St Andrew, and the ruins are those of the Priory of Pluscarden. Few more picturesque exist in Scotland. They remind one of Dryburgh in much the same way as those of Elgin Cathedral remind one of Lincoln, and for the same reason. They both belong to very nearly the same period.

Though the hand of time has dealt hardly with the building, the remains that still exist bear unmistakable evidence that no priory in the kingdom was better furnished with all the comforts and conveniences for a monastic life. There was a choir, used as a chapel, with a suitable vestry; there was a Lady's chapel, a calefactory, a refectory, and a spacious cloister-court. On the second floor were the dormitories, and perhaps also a scriptorium. The prior's house stood apart from the main building, and close beside it stood the mill of the monastery. There may have been other buildings within the precinct wall—a guest-house at any rate—but of these there are now no distinguishable traces. Nothing that would conduce to the material wellbeing of the inmates seems to have been omitted. Spacious vaults for the storage of fuel and provisions; a kitchen with a great fireplace at the eastern end, and two windows opening into the refectory, one large for the heroic feasts of festival days, the other smaller for everyday repasts; pantries, cellars, and “awmries”; a lake which may have done service as a fish-pond; and a spacious garden full of all manner of vegetables and fruit-trees, some of the latter of

which are alive to this day. In one of the walls are still to be seen the recesses where the monks placed their beehives.

In addition to all this the monks possessed broad acres, granges, rights of fishing, multures, casualties, and all those other pertinents of land which in those days made heritable property the most desirable of all earthly possessions. An abstract of the rental of the priory at the time of the Reformation shows an annual income of £796 of money and 2274 bolls of victual, besides 468 barrels or 39 lasts of salmon, not counting such trifles as the customary dues of "muttons, kyddis, and pultries."

The owners of this great estate were a community of monks who followed the rule of the monastery of the Vallis Caulium (Val des Choux) in Burgundy. It was a combination of Carthusian strictness with Cistercian relaxation. The monks met together at certain stated periods in the calefactory and refectory, but at other times led a life of the most absolute seclusion and solitude. The only other monasteries of the order known to have existed in Scotland are Beauuly in Ross-shire and Ardchattan in Argyll. All the three were founded in the same year (1230). The rule, which had only received the papal sanction twenty-five years before, was for the moment the fashion. Pluscarden owed its establishment to the king himself (Alexander II.),—Beauuly and Ardchattan to the piety of private founders.

The head of the monastery was the prior, and he had sixteen monks under his rule. As for the lay brothers and *fratres adscripti*, their number must have been considerable; for a monastery established by royal munificence was not likely to be deficient in anything that would conduce to its comfort or importance.

At first the priory was independent of the bishopric. But in 1233 the bishop took the house under his protection, and

the thin edge of the wedge was introduced, which ended a century later in his successors claiming and extorting full visitatorial, institutional, and deprivatory rights over it.

As for its history, it is unfortunately too similar to that of many another religious house in Scotland. For a time its influence was entirely for good. But with its increasing riches came an increasing relaxation in the morals of its inmates. And before what is called its reformation—a term which, however, has nothing whatever to do with its morality—the irregularities of profession which prevailed within it were, if we may trust tradition, considerable. But it was no worse than other religious houses in the district. Within its nearest neighbour, the Priory of Urquhart, which was distant eleven or twelve miles farther east, the same state of affairs existed, if indeed things there were not somewhat worse. It was a house that belonged to the Benedictines or Black Monks, and was an older establishment than Pluscarden, having been founded by David I.—that “sair sanct for the croun”—in 1124-25, after his succession to his brother Alexander’s share of the kingdom.

It was not, however, the laxity of discipline that prevailed in either, but the diminution of the number of their inmates, that was put forward as the plea for the union of the two houses which subsequently ensued. In the middle of the fifteenth century the monks of Pluscarden were reduced to six, those of Urquhart to two. On the 12th March 1453-54 Pope Nicholas V. published a bull uniting the two houses, with the assent of their respective priors. The buildings of Pluscarden were the larger and the more commodious. But Urquhart was a cell of Dunfermline—an abbey whose heads were sufficiently powerful to exercise a considerable influence in affairs both secular and ecclesiastical in the kingdom. This consideration prevailed. The Black Monks

displaced the White Monks, and continued in possession of the properties of both until the secularisation of the religious houses which ensued after the Reformation. Such was the manner and such were the circumstances under which the Priory of Pluscarden was reformed. Its last ecclesiastical head was Alexander Dunbar, of the family of Dunbars of Westfield, heritable sheriffs of Moray, who died in 1560.

Much of our interest in this establishment arises from the fact that within its walls the 'Liber Pluscardensis' was compiled. Based largely on Bower's 'Scotichronicon,' which in its turn is founded on Fordun's 'Chronica Gentis Scotorum,' it is nevertheless in many respects the narrative of an eye-witness to the events which it relates; and as such it has been accepted as one of our most valuable authorities for early Scottish history. Like the 'Scotichronicon,' it closes with the death of King James I., though it was apparently intended to have been brought down to a later period. The writer's name is nowhere given. Internal evidence, however, points to its having been written about the year 1461 by Maurice Buchanan, a cleric, who had been treasurer to the Dauphiness of France, the Princess Margaret of Scotland.

Within what is now the town of Elgin were two other religious houses—those of the Greyfriars, who were Observantines of the Franciscan order, and of the Blackfriars, who were Benedictines. The monastery of the Greyfriars was at the time of the Reformation a comparatively modern structure, having been built by Bishop John Innes (1407-1414) in substitution for an older building on a different site.<sup>1</sup> The other was contemporary with the cathedral itself.<sup>2</sup> Both were allowed to fall into decay, and beyond the fact of their

<sup>1</sup> Its long-ruinous chapel is now being restored by the Marquis of Bute.

<sup>2</sup> The date of its foundation is given by Spottiswoode ('Religious Houses,' chap. xv.) as 1233 or 1234.

existence they have no history. The same fate befell the preceptory of the Maisondieu, which was built in the time of Alexander II., and rebuilt after its destruction by the Wolf of Badenoch.

A few miles north-east of Forres, on land whose principal characteristics are its flatness and fertility, stand the ruins of the Abbey of Kinloss. The legend of its foundation is not unlike that of Holyrood.

King David I., while hunting one day in the vicinity of Forres, lost his way in the hopeless tangle of a very thick wood. He was alone; the thicket appeared impenetrable; outlet he could find none. In his emergency he betook himself to prayer. His petition was answered by the apparition of a white dove, which, flying gently before him, at last guided him to an open spot, where he found two shepherds tending their flocks. They offered him the shelter of their humble dwelling for the night. In his sleep the Virgin appeared to him and directed him to erect a chapel on the spot where he had been so miraculously preserved. Before he left in the morning he had marked out, with his sword, on the greensward the limits of the building he meant to erect. As soon as he got back to the Castle of Duffus, where he was for the moment residing, he sent for architects and masons; and on the 20th June 1150 the foundations of the Abbey of Kinloss were laid.

The monks whom he placed there belonged to the Cistercian Order, for which he had a very strong predilection; and in their hands it remained till it was suppressed along with the other religious houses at the Reformation. Long before that time, however, it had grown over-rich and over-luxurious, and one can hardly say that its fate was undeserved.

The only one of its abbots who achieved distinction worth recording was Robert Reid, who ruled it from 1526 to 1540.

He was a very wise, learned, cultured, and generous prelate ; and his sudden death at Dieppe in 1558—not without suspicion of poisoning—on his way home from France, where he had been sent as one of the commissioners from Scotland to witness the marriage of Mary Stewart with the Dauphin, is a well-known story. He was President of the Court of Session and one of its ordinary judges in 1554 ; and being the first person who “mortified” a sum of money “towards founding a college in Edinburgh for the education of youth,” he may, as Keith says, “be justly reckoned as the founder of its University.”

It is, however, with his connection with Kinloss that we are more particularly concerned. Even in that obscure sphere of influence he found an outlet for his unwearied and enlightened energy. Moray, with its genial climate, has long been famous for its gardens, and especially for its orchards. It owes this taste in great degree to Abbot Reid. He brought a gardener from France who was an expert in the planting and grafting of fruit-trees—a man who in his younger days had been a soldier, and had lost a leg in a sea-fight with the Spaniards at Marseilles. How many of the 123 varieties of pears and 146 varieties of apples which are still to be found within the district—including such local celebrities as the pear called “the grey guid-wife” and the oslin apple—we owe to the abbot and his one-legged gardener we cannot tell. But the memory of both the one and the other is surely more worthy of grateful remembrance than that of many another whose “storied urn or animated bust” once adorned the great cathedral of Elgin.

Abbot Reid was also a great patron of the fine arts, and we are told how he invited the celebrated painter Andrew Bairhum to Kinloss, and employed him for three years in painting altar-pieces for the three chapels in its church, which

were dedicated to the Magdalene, St John the Evangelist, and St Thomas of Canterbury respectively. He erected a spacious fire-proof library, too, within the abbey, and furnished it with many a valuable tome. And on his return from Rome, carrying with him the papal bull which conferred upon him the abbacy, he induced his friend, the celebrated Piedmontese scholar Ferrerius, to accompany him to Scotland, and installed him at the abbey, where he spent the next five years of his life in the instruction of the monks and in the preparation of certain literary works, some of which yet survive. Amongst these is a life of Thomas Crystall, who was abbot from 1504 to 1535, and another of his friend and benefactor, Abbot Reid.

**III.**

**THE EARLDOM OF MORAY**





### III.

## THE EARLDOM OF MORAY.

THE MEN OF MORAY A DANGER TO THE STATE—THEY ARE DRIVEN TO THE HILLS, AND THE LAIGH GRANTED TO FOREIGN SETTLERS—THE FREEMEN OF MORAY LOYAL TO BRUCE—THE CASTLE OF ELGIN—KING EDWARD'S PEACEFUL CONQUEST OF SCOTLAND—THE BATTLE OF STIRLING—JOHN, EARL OF BUCHAN, EDWARD'S LIEUTENANT IN MORAY—BANNOCKBURN—RANDOLPH, FIRST EARL OF MORAY—THE RANDOLPHS—THE DUNBARS: "BLACK AGNES OF DUNBAR"—THE DOUGLASES—THE STEWARTS—THE GORDONS: "THE COCK OF THE NORTH"—THE STEWARTS AGAIN: "THE GOOD EARL OF MORAY," "THE BONNIE EARL OF MORAY"—EARL FRANCIS, THE ARBORICULTURIST—THE EARL AND THE SHERIFF.

ABOUT the time of Malcolm Ceanmhor, as we have seen, the title of maormor as the head of the district disappears, and that of earl takes its place.

But it is not until we reach the fourteenth century that we meet with anything approaching to the modern conception of the dignity of the earldom. The feudalisation of the province was a gradual process, which took more than two hundred years to effect.

During the greater part of this period the Men of Moray, a warlike and impetuous race, were a thorn in the side of the Scottish kings. By alliance with others of their kind they had become a powerful body—a great tribe, in fact, consisting of

many different clans, yet all in some way or another connected with the Lorn Kings of Dalriada, from whom their first maormors had sprung. Attempts to introduce law and order amongst them had hitherto been in vain. With Celtic tenacity they clung to their old wild ways, and cherished their old warlike habits as if these constituted a moral code of infallible excellence. They were seriously retarding the progress of national civilisation, and not only so, but rapidly becoming a danger to the State.

At length in the reign of Malcolm IV., surnamed "the Maiden" (1153-1165), a serious effort was made to grapple with the evil. The young king—he was only twenty-four when he died—is said by Fordun to have invaded the district of Moravia, and to have removed all the inhabitants "from the land of their birth, as of old Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, had dealt with the Jews, and scattered them throughout the other districts of Scotland, both beyond the hills and on this side thereof, so that not even a native of that land abode there. And he installed therein his own peaceful people." There is undoubtedly some truth in this story, though it is unnecessary to believe it in its integrity. An attempt at the plantation of Moray was certainly made in 1160, with some degree of success. The Men of Moray were driven behind the hills. The fertile lands of the Laigh—betwixt the Spey and the Findhorn—were granted to foreign settlers, and many families were then founded who subsequently rose to high name and estate within the district. As examples we may instance those of De Moravia, whose history will be referred to in the sequel, and of the Inneses, who became in after-years the hereditary enemies of the Dunbars. The charter is still preserved which grants the lands of "Incess," from whom the family afterwards took its

surname, "et Ester-Urecard" (Easter Urquhart) to Berowald the Fleming in 1165. Such settlements, however, were along the seaboard only.

It may well be believed that the extruded inhabitants left nothing undone to harass the foreigners who were now in possession of the lands that had once been their own. From this time, probably, the terror of the Gaelic-speaking people which prevailed through all the subsequent history of Moray took its rise. From this time it became an article of faith with all the inhabitants of the district, in the words of the local proverb, "To speak weil o' the Hielands, but to dwell in the Laigh." The periodical visits of the Highland caterans were, it may almost be said, the one and only cause of misery the people of Moray had in the future. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the evil had reached its height. "Morayland, quhair all men taks thair prey," is a phrase that occurs in a letter of the period (1645) written by Lochiel, the head of the Clan Cameron. It is the testimony of an expert.

The wise policy of the Maiden King's advisers was scrupulously persevered in by his successors. At the beginning of the thirteenth century the freemen of Moray had become, as we shall presently see, a body of sufficient importance to have their grievances represented in the highest quarters.

The year 1290 saw the death of Margaret the Maiden of Norway, the unfortunate child who died on her voyage to Scotland to take possession of the crown, to which she had succeeded as heir to her grandfather, Alexander III. Her death plunged the nation into all the troubles of a disputed succession. Of the thirteen competitors for the crown, the two between whom it soon became apparent the choice would ultimately lie were John Balliol, Lord of Galloway,

who claimed in right of his wife, Devorgilla, a daughter of Margaret, eldest daughter of David, Earl of Huntingdon, grandson of King David ; and Robert Bruce, Lord of Annandale, who was a son of Margaret's younger sister Isobel. Meantime, until their respective claims could be adjusted, the affairs of Scotland were administered by a council of regency, consisting of six persons who had been appointed guardians of the kingdom on the death of King Alexander in 1286.

The rival claims of the two competitors naturally produced differences amongst the guardians. Two of their number, William Fraser, Bishop of St Andrews, and John Comyn, Lord of Badenoch, were keen partisans of Balliol. It ended by their getting the upper hand of their colleagues and virtually assuming the supreme power.

The arbiter to whom both parties agreed to refer their claims was Edward I. of England ; and in 1291 the proceedings in the great competition began. Edward's first step was to induce parties to acknowledge him as Lord Superior of Scotland, and as such entitled to adjudicate in the matter before him. And that done, the pleadings began.

Amongst the papers lodged in process is an "appellatio" or appeal by Donald, Earl of Mar, on behalf of himself and of the freemen or Crown tenants of Moray. It is a powerful protest in aid of Bruce's pretensions against the illegal acts of the two guardians and their substitutes. Not only had they "destroyed and depredated" the lands of the peaceful inhabitants of Moray, the earl's friends and adherents, but they had burned towns and granaries full of corn, had carried away the produce of the country, "and cruelly murdered men, women, and little children." It was alleged that this was all the fault of the guardians. If they had not permitted such excesses, they had suffered the perpetrators to go un-

punished. There was no use to appeal for redress to the men who ought to have been the protectors of the people. Accordingly this "appellatio" was laid before the Lord Superior of the kingdom, who was now the special protector and defender of the country. No special notice seems to have been taken of this document. But as showing on which side the sympathies of the Men of Moray lay from the first, it is of considerable importance to local history.

The story of Balliol's submission to Edward, of his despicable acceptance of the sovereignty as a fief of the English Crown, of his coronation at Scone on St Andrew's Day in the year 1292, of Edward's continued interference in Scottish affairs, of Balliol's citation and appearance before the English Parliament to answer, like a common delinquent, to a charge preferred against him by one of his own subjects, of his resentment of the indignity, of his attempt to reassert the independence of his country, of his renunciation of fealty to Edward, of the English king's advance into Scotland to bring his recalcitrant vassal to his knees, of the defeat of the Scottish army at Dunbar in May 1296, of Balliol's submission in the churchyard of Strathcathro, holding the white wand of penitence in his hand, of his deposition at Brechin, and his subsequent confinement in the Tower of London,—these belong not to local but to national history.

What has a more especial interest for us is Edward's subsequent march to the north of Scotland to rivet the fetters of his suzerainty upon the paralysed limbs of the men whom he now considered as his Scottish subjects. Fortunately we possess in the Norman-French journal of a person who accompanied the expedition a reliable itinerary of his progress. On the 25th July 1296 Edward with his army crossed the Spey, and encamped on a manor called Rapenache, "in the

country of Moray." This manor of Rapenache cannot now with certainty be identified, but local research has fixed upon the lands of Redhall, near the old ferry of Bellie, where they slope down towards the church of Speymouth, as the spot where Edward passed his first night in the county.

Striking his camp next morning at daybreak and following the course of the *via regia*—the broad king's highway—which then, as now, traversed the country from the Spey to the Ness, passing by the priory of Urquhart, the manor of Lhanbride, and the flat wooded lands round Fosterseat, the English army crossed the burn of Linkwood near its confluence with the Lossie, somewhere about the place now known as the Waulk-mill, and then, turning northwards through the Maisondieu lands and the Spittalflat (the Leper Hospital field), entered "la cite D'eign" (Elgin) as evening approached. Here he found "*bon chastell et bonne ville*," and accordingly made up his mind to remain a couple of days.

The castle stood on the top of a little hog-backed eminence—"collis leviter et modice editus," originally called the Castlehill, but now known by the name of the Ladyhill, situated at the western extremity of the High Street. It commanded a wide and enchanting prospect. It stood in the centre of a flat, almost circular, basin, surrounded by low hills—a basin round which the placid Lossie twisted and twined in a succession of curves graceful as the coils of a serpent. Immediately below it, on the north, in the midst of a fertile haugh adjoining the river, stood the monastery of the Blackfriars, embowered in gardens and orchards. A little distance off, towards the east, clustered the quaint gables and thatched roofs of the good town of Elgin, and behind them the imposing outline of its great and grave cathedral. Between these two points the eye caught, or fancied it caught, at times the glint

of the sea or the misty outline of the Cromarty hills. Towards the east the principal object of attraction was the hospital of the Maisondieu, while away to the south-west the landscape was obscured by a belt of thick wood, buried amongst whose leafy retreats, invisible, yet by some strange magnetism making its existence felt, stood the beautiful priory of Pluscarden.

Some sort of a royal residence must have existed on the site for a considerable period before this, for Elgin was a king's burgh in the time of David I., and a castle of Elgin is mentioned as existing as early as the time of Malcolm the Maiden. William the Lion, Alexander II., and Alexander III. had all resided within it. But whether this was the structure in which Edward took up his quarters, or whether it was an older and perhaps wooden building, we do not know. Nor does the melancholy fragment of wall which still surmounts the Ladyhill give us much help in forming an idea of what this old stronghold was like. Yet from other sources we learn that the epithet of the old journalist was not misplaced. It was "*bon chastell*" even in an age which could produce such structures as Bothwell and Dunstaffnage.

It occupied a space of about 240 feet in length and 150 feet in breadth. It was enclosed by a high wall, with, in all probability, towers at its angles, and a crenelated parapet like those of other fortresses of the day. The space within this wall was divided into two courts (*ballia*) by a transverse wall. In the outer one, where the principal gateway was, stood the men's barracks and the storehouses. In the inner one was the keep—a building of three or four storeys in height, comprising on its various floors dungeon, hall, armoury, and sleeping-apartments; and probably also a range of wooden buildings containing a hall, wardrobe-room, and royal chamber.



Here also was the chapel, dedicated to the Virgin, from which the height takes its modern name. Long after the castle had been abandoned as a residence, this chapel seems to have been used as a place of public worship. It was certainly in existence in the sixteenth century, though in what condition cannot be stated with accuracy. And though not a single stone of it now remains, it is still remembered by scholars as the prototype of the Temple of Tranquillity of Florence Wilson, better known as Florentius Volusenus (1504-1546), the only philosophical writer of any distinction which the district has produced, and the author of an admirable treatise, 'De Animi tranquillitate,' which, however, has never received the amount of attention which its ethical and literary merits deserve.

As for the castle itself, it was very near the end of its existence. Two years after this, or thereabouts,—the date can only be approximately given,—when the Scots had regained the upper hand, it was razed to the ground, like Inverness and many other of the northern strongholds. But by whose hand and under what circumstances it was demolished remains, and probably must for ever remain, a mystery.

A curious tradition, which is also told of the Castle of Lochindorb in Cromdale, preserves the memory of its English occupation, and of its recovery by the Scots. It is said that the "pestilence long hovered over it," in the shape of "a dark blue vapour," until it was "by one sudden great exertion pulled down and buried in the hill."

Edward remained in Elgin from Thursday the 26th to Sunday the 29th. He had a magnificent reception. He was met on his approach to the city by the local and municipal authorities, with Sir Reginald le Chen of Duffus, the sheriff, at their head, and a band of minstrels "playing on tabors, horns, cymbals, sackbuts, trumpets, and Moorish flutes." He transacted a good deal of business, too, during his four days' stay.

He received the submission not only of the burgesses and community of Elgin, and of the bishop and clergy of the diocese, but of many knights and gentlemen of distinction. Robert Wishart, Bishop of Glasgow, one of the ablest statesmen of the time, who had been one of the guardians of the kingdom, also presented himself and took the oath of fealty. Altogether his visit to Elgin was attended with very satisfactory results. Things, indeed, looked so propitious that he made up his mind that there was no need for him to prosecute his journey farther. Not a cloud, even though it were no bigger than a man's hand, obscured the political horizon. All Scotland lay bound and shackled at his feet. So serene, indeed, was the outlook, that Edward determined to summon a Parliament. It was at Elgin that the writs summoning the memorable Parliament that met at Berwick on the 28th August were issued. This done, the king proceeded to garrison all the northern strongholds—Elgin, Forres, Nairn, Inverness, Dingwall, and Cromarty—with English troops; and having thus taken effectual measures for the continual peace of the district, he and his army, with the banner of St Cuthbert at their head, set out on their homeward journey.

The Parliament of Berwick was the high-water mark of Edward's success. One has only to glance over the Ragman Roll to see how complete was his almost bloodless conquest of the kingdom. Scotland had become an English garrison. Edward had trodden down—he believed he had stamped out—its nationality. From the date of that memorable parliament he thought he could sleep in peace. He was destined to be rudely awakened.

In the spring of the following year (1297) an alarming rebellion broke out in the southern districts of the kingdom. The moving spirit of this insurrection was William Wallace,

son of Malcolm Wallace of Ellerslie, a country gentleman of no great estate. But he had for his associates such men as Sir Andrew Moray of Pettie and Bothwell; Sir William Douglas, better known as "William Longleg," seventh Baron of Douglas; James the Steward of Scotland and his son; Sir Alexander Lindesay; Sir Richard Lundin; and Wishart, Bishop of Glasgow, who by this time had apparently repented of his submission to England in the previous year. Very soon the rebellion spread to the north. In a short time all the country from Inverness to Aberdeen was on fire. The royal castles were attacked, and their keepers were slain or captured. Duffus, the residence of Sir Reginald le Chen, the sheriff, was burned, as were also the castles of Forres and Elgin.

The leader of this new and alarming outbreak was Sir Andrew Moray, a son of Andrew Moray, a younger brother of Sir William Moray of Bothwell, the head of the family. Sir William was at that time a prisoner in England, but his brother Andrew was a staunch supporter of the patriotic cause. His death, which occurred before that of his brother Sir William, took place ere he had achieved any distinction. The prestige which attaches to the name of Andrew Moray as the right hand of Wallace in promoting the independence of the kingdom is due, therefore, not to Andrew Moray the elder, as is commonly asserted, but to his son, Sir Andrew Moray.

These Morays derived their surname, though not their origin, from a family which was one of the noblest in the north. Freskinus de Moravia, its founder, Lord of Strabrok in the county of Linlithgow, was one of those settlers whom King David I., by a large grant of territory, had introduced into the district from the south. His elder son, Hugh, is the first authentic ancestor of the Earls of Sutherland; while

his younger son, Andrew, holds the same relation to the more locally important family of De Moravia of Duffus and Pettie in Inverness-shire. Somewhere about the middle of the thirteenth century a Walter Moray of Pettie had married the heiress of the Olifards of Bothwell, and had thus added these wide and valuable estates to his own.

The outcome of the fires thus kindled at either extremity of the kingdom was the battle of Stirling (11th September 1297). The English were routed completely. Surrey, the English commander, took to flight. Scotland for the moment was free. But Wallace's satisfaction was chastened, for his brave comrade and colleague in the wardenship of the kingdom, Sir Andrew Moray, met a soldier's death in the fight.

The disastrous defeat of the Scots, however, at the battle of Falkirk in the following year (1298), brought Wallace's rule to a termination, and he had to flee the country. It was a crushing blow, but the Scots had no intention of discontinuing the struggle. They immediately chose as governors John Comyn of Badenoch, better known as the Red Comyn, and John de Soulis, and the fight for freedom went on as before.

In 1303 matters had reached such a height that it was plain that if Edward was to retain his suzerainty he could only do so by force of arms. Collecting a great army—an army so great that resistance was impossible—he entered Scotland, burning, pillaging, and devastating wherever he went. From Edinburgh he proceeded to Aberdeen, and from thence by Banff and Elgin to Kinloss. At this point he turned southward and struck into the heart of Moray. Scouring the hills and plains, he at last reached Lochindorb.

This old stronghold of the Comyns, Lords of Badenoch, whose owner was, as we have seen, for the time being the senior guardian of the kingdom, is situated in Cromdale, about seven miles from Grantown. It is erected on an

island, partly artificial, about a Scottish acre in extent, in the middle of the wild Highland loch of the same name, which is about two miles long by three-quarters of a mile broad. The castle, judging by its existing ruins, was built in the usual quadrilateral form of such structures of the period, and enclosed by walls 7 feet thick and 20 feet high. It had four round towers, one at each of its corners, 23 feet in diameter and two storeys high. These towers were the living-rooms of the garrison. The courtyard within the quadrilateral walls served as a place of security for the stores, the horses, and the cattle of the garrison. On the whole of the southern and on part of the eastern sides of the castle was an outer enclosing wall, which must have added immensely to its strength.

The reduction of Lochindorb was effected without difficulty. And here Edward took up his quarters for a month, occupying himself in receiving the submission of all the chiefs and prominent men of the district. Having fortified the castle and placed a garrison in it, he turned his steps southward, and took up his winter quarters at Dunfermline.

All went well with him for a time after this. Comyn, the one governor, after a last expiring effort of resistance in the neighbourhood of Stirling, submitted to Edward, and was readily admitted into favour. As for John de Soulis, the other, he was absent in France. By the end of 1304 the subjection of Scotland was complete, and Edward was able to hold his Christmas at Lincoln "with great solemnity and rejoicing."

The following year, however, was to see the renewal of trouble. The great struggle for Scottish independence had now been going on for ten years—ever since the revolt of John Balliol. Hitherto the Fates had been unpropitious to Scotland. Do as she would, she could not prevail against

Edward's diplomacy and England's wealth. The next eight years were to see the turn of Fortune's wheel. But they were years of such "vassalage," of such anxiety, and of such suffering to the Scots, that nothing but a firm and abiding faith in the justice of their cause and of their ultimate success could have made them tolerable to those who were the principal actors in the drama.

Fortunately, in Robert the Bruce, the grandson of the unsuccessful candidate for the crown in the days of the "great competition," his countrymen had a leader who was capable of piloting them to victory. He was now thirty-two years of age. His father, a quiet unambitious man, who had been Earl of Carrick in right of his wife, had on her death in 1292 resigned the earldom in favour of his son when he was only eighteen years of age. His grandfather died in 1295. But it was not till Bruce had attained the ripe age of thirty (1303-4) that he came into full possession of the whole of the family estates, which, besides the earldom of Carrick and the lordship of Annandale, embraced a considerable extent of property in England. Prior to this—in 1297—he had, in obedience to a summons from the warden of the Western Marches, taken an oath of fealty to Edward. Soon after, however, he renounced his allegiance on the ground that it had been extorted from him. Edward immediately confiscated his estates and marched westward to punish him. On hearing of this Bruce burned his castle of Ayr, where he was then living, and retreated to Carrick.

Then comes the battle of Falkirk, at which Bruce was not present, though after it was past and over he allowed himself to be appointed one of the regents of the kingdom. His command, however, was a nominal one only. The true Governor of Scotland during the period prior to his coronation was, as we have seen, John Comyn, Lord of Badenoch.

In 1300 Edward, still bent on bringing his vassal to his senses, devastated his paternal estates in Annandale with fire and sword. But by some means a reconciliation between the two was effected, and shortly after Bruce was restored to favour and summoned to Court.

In 1305, while still residing in England, he received an urgent message from Wallace beseeching him to come and take possession of the crown. It was impossible for Bruce at the moment to accept. But in 1306, after Wallace's execution, he managed to escape, and on 25th March of that year he was solemnly crowned at Scone as Robert I. of Scotland. Amongst those who were present on that occasion were his four brothers—Edward, Thomas, Alexander, and Nigel; his nephew, Thomas Randolph; and David de Moravia, Bishop of Moray. After his coronation Bruce marched northwards, and in the course of his progress he is said to have visited Moray. Here he was among friends. The Crown tenants of Moray, as has already been mentioned, were staunch supporters of his grandfather. As for the bishop, he had not only assisted at Bruce's coronation, but he was the friend and relative of Sir Andrew Moray, Wallace's colleague in the generalship of the Scottish armies.

Yet if he had many friends in the district, he had likewise powerful enemies. Prominent amongst these was John, Earl of Buchan, better known as the Black Comyn, to distinguish him from his cousin the Red Comyn, Balliol's nephew, the former guardian of the kingdom, whom Bruce had stabbed, but did not murder, in the church of the Franciscans at Dumfries, only a few months before. His wife Isobel was the daughter of Duncan Macduff, tenth Earl of Fife. Husband and wife were on notoriously bad terms. Buchan was a mainstay and prop of English supremacy; his wife was as strong in favour of Scottish inde-

pendence. Things had lately brought their differences to a height. In virtue of a right claimed by her father's family, the countess had stolen away from her husband and had placed the crown on Bruce's head at Scone. Incredible as it may appear, Buchan had himself denounced her to Edward. And it was not only with his cognisance, but at his instance, that she was now undergoing the terrible and extraordinary punishment which Edward had invented for her crime. A "kage" of timber was erected outside one of the turrets of Berwick Castle, and in this the unfortunate woman was incarcerated. Here she remained for seven wretched years, till the death of her husband admitted of her imprisonment being changed to one more tolerable.

Buchan was *custos* of Moravia—in other words, Edward's lieutenant in those parts. We may be sure that it was not want of will that had hitherto prevented his taking the field against King Robert. The family to which he belonged were themselves competitors for the crown. Though their claim could scarcely be said to have been seriously entertained, the antiquity, nobility, and importance of the family, which had come over from France, it was said, with William the Conqueror, rendered them formidable opponents. Their pretensions, however, had at all times been greater than their influence. And they lacked that which had all along been the source of the Bruces' strength—their sympathy with the aspirations of the people to achieve their independence.

It was not till the year 1307 that Buchan essayed to try conclusions with Bruce. He was unsuccessful. Edward Bruce, the king's brother, met him at Inverurie and defeated him with considerable loss. Buchan was not inclined to take his discomfiture as decisive. Next spring (May 1308) he sent out a thousand of his men, who were stationed at Old Meldrum, to attack the king. Bruce was lying sick on his



bed ; but on hearing of the assault he rose from his couch, and, calling for his arms and his horse, led his men in person against his persistent foe. This time even Buchan could not pretend to misunderstand the result. His troops were chased off the battle-field and pursued as far as Fyvie. After that the earl retired to England, where he died in 1312-13, and so ceased from troubling. The year 1314 saw the battle of Bannockburn and the triumph of the national cause. The independence of Scotland was achieved, and Robert Bruce was king in fact as well as in name.

Amongst his earliest acts was the erection of the province of Moray into an earldom, and the bestowal of the dignity on his nephew Thomas Randolph. It was a judicious step ; for faithful though the district had been to him and his, some of the old leaven of turbulence which had characterised it through all its past history still remained, and for the moment it had no territorial head. Not, perhaps, that there was much to fear. Hitherto the predominating influence in the district had been the families of Comyn and De Moravia. But Buchan, the fugleman of the Comyns, was dead. As for the family of De Moravia, which had at one time shown equally strong English proclivities, there was little to be apprehended from it. About a century before the family had been split into three great branches. The elder branch—the descendants of Hugo, elder son of Freskinus, Lord of Strabrok—had since 1232 been Earls of Sutherland ; and Kenneth, the existing earl, was destined to be the father-in-law of Bruce's daughter Margaret. The next branch—the descendants of Andrew, the second son of Freskinus—had been represented by Sir Reginald le Chen of Duffus, who had been sheriff of the county and an influential advocate of the English cause. But Sir Reginald had now been dead about two years, and any danger from his influence

was consequently at an end. As for the younger branch—the descendants of William, the founder's youngest son—they were now represented by Sir Andrew Moray of Bothwell, the posthumous son of that Andrew Moray who was killed at the battle of Stirling, and who, as the brother-in-law of Bruce and the warden of the kingdom during the minority of his son David II., was destined to add still further to the lustre of the family name. His death in 1238, at the early age of forty, was one of the most severe blows to which the party of freedom and national independence had to submit. As political factors in local history, therefore, the supremacy of these two powerful families was at an end. From this time forward the successive holders of the earldom of Moray take their place.

The earldom of Moray has been held by seven different families: by the Randolphs from 1314 to 1346; by the Dunbars from 1373 to 1429; by the Douglasses from 1429 to 1455; by the royal family of Stewarts from 1457 to 1470; by an illegitimate branch of the Stewarts from 1501 to 1544; by the Gordons from 1549 to 1562; and by another illegitimate branch of the royal Stewarts, in the possession of whose descendants in the female line it still remains, from 1562.

Taken as a whole, few earldoms in Scotland can boast of a bede-roll of names more eminent in the annals of their country. Randolph, the first earl, "Black Agnes of Dunbar," "the Good Earl of Moray," and "the Bonnie Earl of Moray" are not merely local magnates, but "household words" in Scottish history. The connection of some of these Moray earls with the monarchy—a connection which, though one of blood, was not always one of interests—helped, no doubt, to bring this about. It placed them in the front of their time and forced them to lead the van in battle. Hence the history

of the earldom follows more closely than that of many others the history of the kingdom. Hence, also, it embraces a wider scope, and has consequently a wider importance, than that of the bishopric. The bishops of Moray might at times, indeed, wield the labouring oar, but it was the earls who held the tiller of the ship of State. Yet, so far as the district is concerned, the history of the bishopric is by far the more interesting of the two.

Thomas Randolph, first Earl of Moray, was the son of the king's eldest sister Isobel and of Sir Thomas Randolph of Strathdon, who had been grand chamberlain of Scotland from 1273 to 1296, during the reign of Alexander III. He was one of the earliest associates of his uncle. But after Bruce's defeat at the battle of Methven in 1306 he had deserted his cause and sworn fealty to Edward. In 1308 he was restored to favour. From that moment his loyalty to his uncle never swerved: he became one of his most trusted generals. Brave to rashness, his brilliant exploits were the wonder and the admiration of the camp. Yet he very nearly cost Bruce the battle of Bannockburn. By some unaccountable oversight, he had neglected to intercept a troop of English horsemen who were stealing forward under shelter of the trees of the New Park, in the direction of Stirling Castle, which it was the object of the enemy to capture. Bruce immediately galloped up to him and reproached him for his carelessness, adding, with stinging reproach, that "a rose had fallen from his chaplet." Randolph at once started in pursuit. He came up with the English at a place now known as Randolph's Field. A fierce fight ensued. He and his little band were in imminent danger. Sir James Douglas, his great rival, besought the king to let him go to his assistance, and with difficulty obtained it. But he had not gone far when he saw, from the number of empty saddles that met his gaze and

from other tokens, that the tide of fortune had turned, and that the English were on the point of discomfiture. He immediately called a halt. "Randolph is winning," he exclaimed; "we must not spoil his victory." Then he withdrew his men and returned to the king.

Randolph's career after the battle of Bannockburn was no less glorious. Age and sickness and the sufferings he had endured were beginning to tell upon the king. It was to his nephew, and after him to the devoted Douglas, that he intrusted the completion of his work. Again and again Randolph, sometimes alone, at others accompanied by the king or Douglas, invaded England, devastating the northern parts with fire and sword. Berwick was taken; the "Chapter of Mitton" was won; Edward himself had to fly from Billand Abbey to escape being captured. Wherever there was work to be done it was on Randolph that the burden fell. And sometimes the work was of a kind that one would scarcely have thought to be suited to a rough soldier like him. Thus in 1324, when it was thought necessary to send an embassy to Avignon to put matters right with the Pope, it was Randolph who acted as ambassador. He succeeded so well that he obtained for his uncle the recognition of his royal style and dignity, which the Pope had hitherto withheld. It was Randolph, too, who, with the assistance of the Earl Marshal and three churchmen, concluded a treaty with France, and a renewal of the ancient alliance between the two nations. And when the king died in 1329, it was Randolph who, in terms of the Act of Settlement, became the guardian of the realm and of the infant heir. Three years later, on the 28th of July 1332, his illustrious career was closed by the hand of death.

The charter erecting the earldom is in the most ample terms. It grants "to our dear nephew Thomas Randolph, *Miles*, in full county and regality, with jurisdiction in the

four pleas of the Crown and all other inferior pleas, with the great customs of our burgh of Inverness, and the cocket of the same, with the manor of Elgin, which is hereby created the capital mansion of the county of Moray," and with all the other mansions, towns, thanages, advocations, lakes, forests, moors, marshes, roads, ways, stanks, mills, fishings in salt water and fresh, rights of hawking and hunting, and the innumerable other pertinents of heritable property in those days, "all the lands from the water of Spey where it falls into the sea, including the lands of 'Fouchabre, Rothenayk, Rothays, and Bocharme,' thence following the course of the Spey to the marches of Badenoch, including the lands of 'Badenach, Kyncardyn, and Glencarni,' thence following the march of Badenoch to the march of Lochaber, including the lands of 'Louchabre, Maymer, Logharkech, Glengarech, and Glenelg,' thence following the march of Glenelg to the sea towards the west, thence by the sea to the marches of northern Argyll, from these marches to those of Rossie, from the marches of Rossie till you come to the water of Forne, and from the water of Forne to the eastern sea." The territory so conceded included lands within the four modern counties of Banff, Elgin, Nairn, and Inverness, and covered a tract of no less than 2550 square miles. It was a princely donation. It was conferred upon a no less princely man.

Four miles and a half from Forres, on a rising ground not far from the river Findhorn, surrounded by an umbrageous forest, stands the castle of Darnaway, the Morayshire seat of its ancient earls. The wide expanse of greensward in front of it, dotted with old timber-trees—some of which are ashes, now, alas! waning to decay—has long been the theme of local admiration. As the old couplet says—

"Darnaway green is bonnie to be seen,  
In the midst of Morayland."

As for the castle itself, though built at an unfortunate period of British architecture—the commencement of the present century—it contains a suite of well-proportioned rooms, suited to the requirements of such a residence; while from its commanding position extensive views are obtained across the Moray Firth, reaching to the hills of Sutherland and Caithness. Attached to it is an ancient hall, said to be able to hold one thousand men, with an open roof of fine dark oak similar to those of the Parliament House and of the Tron Church of Edinburgh—a style of roof which, though not uncommon in the larger castles and early public buildings of Scotland, such as the Parliament Houses of Stirling and Linlithgow, and the castles of Doune, Dirleton, and Tantallon, has few remaining examples nowadays. Tradition has it that this roof and this hall are the remains of the castle that Thomas Randolph unquestionably built on this site.<sup>1</sup> Tradition is wrong, of course, as it generally is in matters of detail. The Exchequer Accounts inform us that they were a portion—the only portion now existing—of the castle built by Archibald Douglas, Earl of Moray, about 1450. It is, however, a very interesting old building, and full of historic memories.

Thomas Randolph, by his countess Isobel, daughter of Sir John Stewart of Bonkyl, had a family of four children—two sons and two daughters. His eldest son, Thomas, succeeded him in the earldom, but enjoyed it for only twenty-three days. He was killed at the battle of Dupplin on the 12th August 1332. The career of his brother John, the third earl, was full of vicissitudes. The times were troublous, and his position compelled him to share in the troubles of the times. After

<sup>1</sup> A very ancient chair, not unlike the Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey, is still shown to visitors as Earl Randolph's chair. Its authenticity, however, is doubtful.

the battle of Halidon Hill in 1333, at which the English avenged Bannockburn, he escaped to France, where he remained till the spring of 1335. On his return to Scotland he was appointed co-regent of the kingdom with Robert the Steward. Shortly afterwards he was taken prisoner by the English governor of Jedburgh Castle and carried off into England. His place as one of the guardians of the kingdom was taken by Sir Andrew Moray. He regained his freedom in 1342, having been exchanged for the Earl of Salisbury. The few remaining years of his life were mostly spent in the exciting pursuit of Border warfare. He was slain at the battle of Neville's Cross near Durham on the 17th October 1346. His wife was that Lady Euphemia de Ross who subsequently by papal dispensation married King Robert II.; but he left no family, and with him the line of the Randolphins, Earls of Moray, comes to an end.

When John Randolph was in exile in France, Moray had again to receive a royal and unwelcome visitor.

Edward of Windsor, better known as Edward III., who had succeeded to the crown of England on the deposition of his father, Edward of Carnarvon (Edward II.), in 1327, had taken up the heritage of animosity towards Scotland, bequeathed to his descendants by Edward I. at his death in 1307. Though David II., the son of Robert the Bruce, was king *de facto*, Edward preferred to regard John Balliol's son, Edward, as king *de jure*. And by his efforts Edward Balliol, during King David's residence in France, had been crowned at Scone as king of Scotland on 24th September 1332. But even when David, after his return from Château Gaillard, was captured at the battle of Neville's Cross in 1346, and conveyed a prisoner to the Tower of London, the nation at large still refused to acknowledge Edward Balliol as their sovereign. Five times during his reign, which lasted fifty years, Edward

III. invaded Scotland to maintain Edward Balliol's pretensions, or to assert his own right to the suzerainty of the kingdom.

In the year 1336, in the course of the second of these expeditions, Edward penetrated into Moray. The ostensible object of his journey was to relieve the castle of Lochindorb, where the widow and heir of David, the late Earl of Atholl, a devoted adherent of the English interests, were residing, and which at the moment was threatened by Sir Andrew Moray, the guardian of the kingdom. The real reason was to recover these districts, which Sir Andrew's strenuous efforts had, as it seemed to him, only too successfully seduced from their allegiance to his puppet monarch, Edward Balliol.

Edward succeeded in both his objects. The countess and her ladies were relieved; the district was reduced to subjection, "the whole of Moray" was consumed with fire, but, to his eternal credit, Edward left the churches and canonical buildings of Elgin untouched. Moray long remembered—it had only too good cause to remember—the coming of its last royal English visitor.

The death of John Randolph brings us into connection with a family which has sunk its roots wider and deeper into the soil of this district than has any other settler family of foreign extraction.

In the reign of Malcolm III. (Ceanmor) the earldom of Northumberland was purchased from William the Conqueror by a certain Gospatric, a man of Celtic descent and of noble family. He had some sort of claim to the dignity in right of his mother; but his recognition by the Conqueror was only conceded on payment of a great sum of money. On his father's side he was a kinsman of Malcolm Ceanmor, whose hostility to the Conqueror was as much a matter of conviction as of interest. Very soon Gospatric began to discover that he



had placed himself in a perfectly untenable position by his acceptance of the earldom from William. He had not only become the Conqueror's vassal, but he had alienated himself as well with his own relations with the people of the district. He joined with his people and Malcolm Ceanmor in supporting the cause of Edgar the Atheling, with the natural result—he was unsuccessful. It ended by William depriving him of his earldom and Gospatric taking refuge in Scotland.

Malcolm received him kindly, and in 1072 “bestowed upon him Dunbar, with the adjacent lands in Lothian.” Gospatric made no attempt to return to England, but settled down for good and all on the lands his generous kinsman had endowed him with ; and taking their name from their possessions, according to the custom of the period, the family which he founded was known by the name of Dunbar from that time forward. In due course they “conquest” great possessions both in Lothian and on the Borders, and became Earls of March—that is, of the Marches.

But it was accident that connected them with Moray. Randolph, the first earl, it may be remembered, left two daughters. Agnes, the elder of the two, was a truly remarkable person. It was an age of heroic women. King Robert's sister Christina, who defended Kildrummie ; Philippa, Queen of England ; the Countess of Salisbury ; and the Countess of Montfort, have each and all of them earned a reputation which in those days was seldom conceded to any of their sex. Agnes was no beauty. She was masculine in feature and swarthy in complexion ; but she managed to secure a husband, and a distinctly eligible one, in Patrick Dunbar, Earl of March.

“Black Agnes of Dunbar,” as from that time she was called, is one of the most famous heroines in Scottish history. Every one knows how gallantly and manfully, if the expression may be allowed, she defended her husband's castle of Dunbar

for nineteen weeks during his absence. The story is better told in the 'Book of Pluscarden' than in any other of the old chronicles, except perhaps the 'Chronicle of Lanercost.'

"In the year 1337, on the 15th day of the month of January, Dunbar Castle was besieged by Sir William Montagu, Earl of Salisbury, and the Earl of Arundel, the leaders of the English king's army; and though they were there half a year, and assailed that castle with divers engines, they could in no wise prevail against it. Nor was there any other captain in command therein but the Countess of the Marches, commonly called Black Agnes of Dunbar, who defended the besieged castle admirably; for she was a very wise and clever and wary woman. She indeed laughed at the English, and would in the sight of all wipe with a most beautiful cloth the spot where the stone from the engine hit the castle wall. The king of England, however, hearing that they had no success whatever there, sent a large army to reinforce them; but this column was broken, put to flight, and destroyed by Sir Laurence Preston, who, however, was himself wounded in the mouth with a spear, and died on the field of battle without the knowledge of his men; and through anger at his death all the prisoners were straightway put to the sword."

Wyntoun adds an additional graphic touch. "As thai bykeryd thare a day," he says, William of Spens was shot dead by an arrow discharged from the battlements.

"And than the Mwntagw can say,  
'This is ane off my Ladyis pynnys,  
Hyr amowris thus till my hart rynnys.'"

It is impossible to say definitely what was the exact nature of the title by which Black Agnes's husband claimed to be Earl of Moray. In all probability it was based merely on his wife's inheritance of the earldom lands. That he called himself Earl of Moray, however, is certain. The name of

Patrick, Earl of March and Moray, not only appears as witness to royal charters in and after July 1358, but charters granted by himself in that capacity exist.

George, who succeeded him in the earldom of March, was not his son, as is commonly stated—for Black Agnes left no issue—but his cousin, and at the same time his wife's nephew. He was the eldest son of Sir Patrick Dunbar by Isabella, younger daughter of Thomas Randolph. He seems to have made no claim to the earldom of Moray.

On George's death his younger brother, John Dunbar, succeeded him as Earl of March. Whatever may have been the nature of his two immediate predecessors' right to the earldom of Moray, John Dunbar's is beyond all cavil. For on the 9th March 1373, a year or two after his marriage to Marjorie, daughter of Robert II., he received from the king a charter confirming the earldom upon himself and his wife, their heirs-male and the longest liver of them, with the exception of the lands of Lochaber and Badenoch, which were specially reserved for the king's son, Alexander Stewart.

"This man," says Pitscottie, "was married upon King Robert II.'s daughter, and promoted to be Earl of Moray; for it returned again to the king's house by reason that it failed in the heir-male of Randal; and this was the first Dunbar that bruicked the lands of Moray." This statement, however, must be qualified, at least to the extent that if Patrick Dunbar's title was a mere assumption, it received something very closely approaching to royal recognition.

John Dunbar's death occurred in 1390, and was the result of a wound received by him at a tournament in Smithfield, London, when fighting with the Earl of Nottingham, Earl-Marshal of England, whom he had come specially from Scotland to encounter. He left two sons, and a daughter, Mabella, who was married to Robert, sixth Earl of Sutherland.

Little is known of Thomas Dunbar, his eldest son, who succeeded him. He was taken prisoner at the battle of Homildon in 1402, and is supposed to have died in England. After his death his daughter Euphemia married Sir Alexander Cumyn of Altyre.

Earl Thomas's successor was another Thomas, his son ; and then the earldom passed to the cousin of the latter, James Dunbar, who was also the proprietor of the lands of Fren-draught, in Banffshire, in right of his mother, Maud Fraser of Lovat. When James I., after his long captivity in England, was permitted by the English king to return to Scotland in 1424, certain Scottish nobles of high rank were sent to England as hostages for his ransom. The Earls of Moray, Thomas and James, were successively of their number. When Thomas was released in 1425, his cousin James seems to have taken his place. He remained in England for about three years. He was murdered at Fren-draught in August 1429.

The next name which appears on the earldom lists is that of Archibald Douglas, who married Earl James's second daughter, Elizabeth. He was a brother of the Earl of Douglas of the day, and sided with him in his hereditary hostility to James II. The Angus or younger branch of the family, on the other hand, took the part of the king, and its head was appointed leader of the royal army. The feud between the two branches of the family culminated in the battle of Arkinholm in 1454-55. The Douglas branch was defeated, and "*Archibaldus pretensus comes Moravia*," as an old record calls him, was killed. Douglas's title to the earldom was, like so many others both before and after, in right of his wife only.<sup>1</sup> After his death, Lindsay informs us, "he was convict and forfalt for *les majestie*, and the earldom returned to the kingis handis again."

<sup>1</sup> Pitscottie's Chronicles, vol. ii. p. 63.

Shortly afterwards James II. conferred it on his son David, who, however, died in nonage in 1470, and is thus known in history as the "little Earl of Moray."

For thirty-one years thereafter no Earl of Moray existed. But on the 12th June 1501 James IV. conferred the earldom on James Stewart, his illegitimate son by Jean or Janet, daughter of the second Lord Kennedy. His life was spent in comparative obscurity, and he died in his castle of Darnaway on the 12th June 1544, having held the earldom for exactly forty-three years to a day.

The next Stewart who enjoyed the title was a man of a very different type. There are few greater problems to the student of our national history than James Stewart, Earl of Moray from 1562 to 1570. And few historical personages have suffered more from the malice of their enemies and the mistaken eulogies of their friends. While to some he is "the Good Earl of Moray," the patriot, the sincere reformer, the wise holder of the helm of the State, to others he is the incarnation of hypocrisy and self-seeking, a disloyal subject, the evil genius of his sister—a traitor to queen and country, to everything and everybody but himself. Some day, perhaps, his life will be written as it ought to be written, with calm judicial impartiality and a due weighing of the exceptional difficulties of his time and surroundings. Until that time arrives his virtues or his vices must remain as much a matter of controversy and individual opinion as the guilt or innocence of his sister Queen Mary.

He was the natural son of King James V. and of Margaret Erskine, the daughter of the fourth Lord Erskine and fifth Earl of Mar, and he was born in the year 1533. The king, with a view to their providing, had destined all his illegitimate sons to the Church, and accordingly, when James was only three years of age, he was presented to the Priory of St

Andrews. It was an office of great emolument and of the highest dignity. The Prior of St Andrews preceded all other ecclesiastical dignitaries of equal rank. If wealth and place and gorgeous vestments had attractions for him, James Stewart might well have rested content with his first preferment; but he was possessed of an inordinate ambition, which even aimed—so at least his enemies asserted—at the highest office in the realm. From his youth upwards his career is that of a man bent on absorbing to himself all power and all authority in the State. And if the methods he employed to attain his object were often tortuous and unjustifiable, they only show the difficulties that beset his path. He gained his object ultimately, as most men do who allow nothing to obscure the goal of their aspirations, in fact if not in name. As Regent, he had the supremacy, the influence, almost the prestige, of a king. None of his predecessors had ever exercised such absolute power or enjoyed such unfettered control. Yet he was not satisfied. The Regent Moray could never forget, and he certainly never forgave, the accident of his birth.

From an early age he coveted the rich earldom of Moray. In 1549, when he was a lad of between sixteen and seventeen years of age, the earldom was for the moment in the gift of the Crown. James, who by this time had conceived a sincere aversion to a clerical life, solicited his sister for it. It was refused, to his infinite chagrin and disappointment, on the advice of the queen-mother, Mary of Guise, who recommended the prior to continue in the Church; and shortly after it was conferred on John Gordon, tenth Earl of Huntly. The charter in his favour is dated 13th February 1549.

The new Earl of Moray belonged to a family which, during the last two hundred years, had become a feudal power of the

first importance in the north. It was of Anglo-Norman origin, and took its name from the lands of Gordon in Berwickshire, where it had been planted in the reign of David I. It first made its appearance in the north in the early part of the fourteenth century as the proprietor of the lands of Strathbogie in Banffshire. James II. conferred upon it the earldom of Huntly. Now the Gordons, Lords of Strathbogie and Earls of Huntly, were a power as great in the north as were the Earls of Argyll in the west—as useful at times to the Crown, and at others as troublesome.

In addition to his Lowland estates, which yielded him a goodly revenue “over all the district now beyond the Caledonian Canal and the lakes it unites,” “the Cock of the North” kept princely state in his Castle of Strathbogie;<sup>1</sup> and events afterwards revealed that its sumptuous furnishings shamed those of the royal palace. He had the flourishing town of Aberdeen, with its university and cathedral, by way of capital. Here he seems to have had a small fleet with which he kept up foreign communications, as little under restrictions from the Court of Holyrood as those of the King of Norway or Denmark might be.

George Gordon, the earl of the day, was one of the most accomplished men of his time. He was also a great politician. In 1536 he had been one of the regents of the kingdom during James V.'s absence in France in search of a wife. As a staunch supporter of the ancient league between the two kingdoms, he had been one of the three Scottish earls whom the King of France in 1545 decorated with the Order of St Michael. He was commander of the Scottish forces at the disastrous battle of Pinkie in 1547, and had been taken prisoner and carried off into England; but he had effected his escape, and had returned to his native country.

<sup>1</sup> Now called Huntly Castle.

It was probably in return for his services and sufferings that the earldom of Moray was conferred on him. Soon after, however, we find the new earl under deep suspicion with the Government. He was seemingly playing a game of his own, which assuredly was not to the liking of the party which now held the reins of power. The Reformation had come. The Lords of the Congregation had gained the upper hand. And the Lord James, the former Prior of St Andrews, was their leader. Queen Mary, now a widow, had returned to Scotland. But as a Catholic, while the Government was Protestant, she was a mere cipher in her brother's hands. Huntly, after some dallings with the Protestant leaders not wholly to his credit, was now understood to be the head of the old Catholic party. Overt action on his part was out of the question. But secret negotiations, plottings, and intrigues were not only possible but probable. Moreover, he had a son, a certain John Gordon, "a comely young gentleman, very personable, and of good expectations," though he was not the heir, whom it was said the queen "loved entirely."

A quarrel which this same comely young gentleman, the earl's fourth son, had with Ogilvie of Findlater was the proximate cause of his father's undoing. It was far from the actual cause, however. The real causes were the earl's unpopularity with the leaders of the Protestant party and the Lord James's enmity towards him. The result of young John Gordon's tussle with Findlater in the Edinburgh streets had been his imprisonment. But "Scotch prisons," as Burton remarks, "were ever notorious for their unretentiveness of prisoners of his rank," and in a short time he was once more at liberty.

In August 1562 the queen, accompanied by her brother the prior, started on a royal progress towards the north. The queen's Master of the Household, who accompanied



the expedition, kept a diary of the journey written in French, and it is of much interest to local readers. The royal party arrived at Elgin from Aberdeen on the 6th of September, and remained there till the 8th. After dinner that day the queen went on to Kinloss, and stayed at the abbey two whole days. She found the accommodation there exceptionally good. On the 10th she went on after dinner to Darnaway, where she supped and slept, and next morning held a council. Then she went on into Nairnshire. On the 11th she dined at the castle of Moyness, now non-existent, as the guest of John Dunbar of the family of Westfield, heritable sheriffs of Moray. Passing through Nairn, she continued her journey to Inverness, where she was refused admission to the castle, and had accordingly to take up her quarters in a private house in Bridge Street long known as the "Wine-Shop." She stayed four days there, and then proceeded to Kilravock. From thence she made her way back to Aberdeen.

An invitation which she received in the course of this expedition to visit Huntly at Strathbogie had been declined. Huntly was given to understand that so long as his son was a fugitive from justice it was impossible to accept it, and it was required that the lad should again "enter himself in ward." This was more than the haughty Gordons could stand. The outcome of the business was that Huntly with his Highland host took the field against his sovereign. At the fight at Corrichie he met his death—smothered, it was said, in his armour. His son, who had so largely conducted to his undoing, was tried for treason and beheaded at Aberdeen. The earl's body was taken to Edinburgh and sentence of forfeiture pronounced against it.

The opportunity which James Stewart had waited for during the last thirteen years had now arrived. The power of the house of Huntly was broken, at least for the time. The prior

Obtained the coveted prize. He was created Earl of Moray by the queen at Aberdeen on 1st June 1566.

He had still four years of life before him—four busy years, crowded with affairs of the highest political consequence, vivid with interest. His opposition to the Darnley marriage, his retreat to France in 1567, his almost immediate return and appointment to the regency, his defeat of his sister at Langside in 1568, his struggle with and victory over the Hamilton faction, and, last and saddest and most dramatic scene of all, his assassination by Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh in the streets of Linlithgow on 21st January 1570, rivet the imagination and appeal to the sympathies or the antipathies of the student as the career of few of our historical personages succeed in doing. If he had not been cut off at such an early age—he was only thirty-seven when he was murdered—who shall say that he might not have attained the secret goal of his ambition, the crown itself,—changed the whole course of his country's history, and proved himself the greatest sovereign for good or for evil that ever sat on Scotland's throne.

Little is known of his connection with the county, beyond the fact that he once held a privy council at Elgin, when amongst other business the revenues of Pluscarden Priory were discussed. The local historian of the day had other things to think about. What concerned him far more was a quarrel which had broken out between the two powerful families of Dunbar and Innes, and bade fair to develop into a healthy hereditary feud. These two families were the largest holders of property of the rank of landed gentry in the county. The Inneses predominated in the east, the Dunbars in the west. What caused the quarrel is not very clear. It may have been, as Young the local historian supposes, mere jealousy of each other's influence. But on the 6th January 1554 the slumbering ashes of dis-

cord were fanned into flame. On that day the Inneses, to the number of eighty persons, all armed, came to the cathedral of Elgin during vespers, "and of ancient feud and forethought felony" cruelly invaded Alexander Dunbar, Prior of Pluscarden; David Dunbar, Dean of Moray; and other laymen, with purpose to slay them "in presence of the holy sacraments." The Dunbars on their part had come to church that evening with like deadly intent. Their object was the slaughter of William Innes of that ilk and his servants. Which side came off best is not certain. At any rate the battle was not decisive, for we find both parties subsequently invoking the arbitrament of the law. Twenty years of litigation, however, had not settled their differences. And in 1577 the smouldering fire of dissension broke out afresh. On the 18th October of that year a band of Inneses—John Innes, brother-german of Robert Innes of Invermarkie, John Innes *alias* Long John, Andrew Innes *alias* Kow-the-gegat, Andrew Innes *alias* the Scholar—with their followers and others, all "boden in feir of war with corslets, head-pieces, swords, and shields, made a night attack on the manse of Alexander Dunbar, Dean of Moray, situated within the precinct—now known as the North College"—slew Andrew Smyth, the dean's servant, broke open the stable door and cut the halters of four of the horses, intending to carry them away. The dean, roused from his sleep by the disturbance, came out of his chamber in his dressing-gown, unarmed save for the dirk which he always carried. One of the John Inneses—we are not told which—immediately attacked him with his sword, wounding him severely both in his head and in his hands. "And the said John, not satisfied with his blood, most cruelly, horribly, and without mercy slew Elizabeth Dunbar, the dean's daughter, a girl of thirteen years old, killing her

with a thrust of his sword in her breast, and left her dead on the ground."

This was going a little too far even for a family feud. The Inneses were indicted, fled from justice, declared rebels, and put to the horn. This only made matters worse. Seven months afterwards they paid the dean another nocturnal visit. They went to his country house at Carsehillock and carried off forty sheep—wethers, ewes, and lambs. The king at once granted a commission to the sheriffs of all the northern counties and other local authorities to apprehend the rogues, to destroy their nests, and by every possible means to bring them to justice.

Nothing came of it. Not an Innes could be found. By this time both parties were pretty tired of the strife. When, therefore, mutual friends interposed to appease their dissensions, they readily availed themselves of their good offices. Arbiters were appointed to settle their differences, and in due time they issued their decree arbitral. What its terms were is of no concern to us now. What is of more importance, and infinitely more surprising, is that both parties abode by the award, and that the thirty years' blood-feud was then and there finally brought to an end. A more instructive illustration of the state of society in those days can hardly be found.

To the "Good Earl" succeeds the "Bonnie Earl" of Moray, who is chiefly remembered as the victim of one of the most appalling tragedies in the whole range of our annals.

James Stewart, eldest son of Sir James Stewart of Doune, afterwards Lord Doune, was, like more than one of his predecessors, Earl of Moray by courtesy only. He had married Elizabeth Stewart, eldest daughter of the Regent, and his only claim to the title was in right of his wife. He was one of the handsomest men of his time. An old chronicle describes him as a sort of Amadis—"comely, gentle, brave, and of a great

stature and strength of body." "A comely personage, strong of body as a kemp or champion," is the remark of another observer.

The picture of him at Darnaway—the only authentic portrait of him, so far as we are aware, taken during life—represents him as a young man of three- or four-and-twenty. The head is particularly small in proportion to the body. The shoulders are sloping, but the ill-fitting doublet seems to cover a broad and deep chest. The shape of the face is remarkable, owing to the steep slope of the jawbones, which end in a remarkably delicate and exceptionally pointed chin. The hair is of a deep auburn, almost inclined to red, and is thrown back over a high and narrow forehead. A strand of hair, parted from the head above the ear, hangs down like a ringlet rather more than an inch below the side of the face, resembling the side-whiskers of twenty or thirty years ago. The eyes are dark brown, the eyebrows small, the nose long and sensitive and slightly turned up at the point. The upper lip is covered with a boyish moustache; the mouth is small, and the under lip of almost girlish delicacy. The ears are prominent, and he wears ear-rings—a couple of linked golden rings to which is suspended a small square jewel. The dress is plain but rich. The doublet is crimson, close-buttoned down the front, with a velvet band of the same colour across the shoulder. He wears a square, apparently lawn or muslin, collar, trimmed with an inch-wide border of lace. And over his right shoulder, fastened behind the neck with a handsome jewel, is a narrow white satin embroidered scarf,—the queen's gift to him, according to tradition. What strikes the observer most is the effeminacy of his face and complexion, and the sweet, almost sad, gentleness of the expression.

There is one other picture of him known to be in existence. It is hidden away out of sight in the charter-room at Doni-

bristle. It is as repulsive as the Darnaway picture is pleasing. It represents the naked body of the Earl as it appeared after death, gashed with wounds, horrid with clotted blood and the blue shades of decomposition.<sup>1</sup> Tradition has it that it was painted by order of Lady Doune, his mother, after his murder, and sent to the king at Holyrood. It is in all probability the original of the banner which was sent round amongst his tenants in the north to inflame their minds and induce them to take vengeance upon the cruel Huntly.

The story of the murder of the Bonnie Earl of Moray belongs more properly to the history of Fife than to that of Moray. Yet it may not be out of place to narrate it here. Song and legend have embalmed it for all future ages, and transformed a mere private and personal difference into a historical event of the first importance.

Though he had never taken any prominent part in public business, he was a great favourite with the people and the Kirk. He was a still greater favourite, at any rate in certain quarters, at Court. If the scandal of the day is to be believed, Queen Anne had a warmer regard for him than her jealous lord and master, James VI., approved of. There was probably nothing to justify his suspicions. But to James, who certainly was not an Apollo, and who yet had a very good opinion of his own personal attractions, it was no doubt irritating to listen to the queen's loud and repeated expressions of admiration of the earl "as a proper and gallant man." Certain it is that the handsome lad did not stand so well in the grace of the king as of the queen. But the reason for this was in all likelihood of a different character.

<sup>1</sup> There are two cuts on the face—one at the top of the nose, right side, another at the side of the nose below the left eye; two on the right breast; one on the left breast lower down than those on the other side; four on the right side of the body; and a severe one on the right thigh. The picture bears the inscription: "1591, Feby. 7. God revenge my cavs. Æta 24."

Moray, though not a relation, but merely a connection by marriage, of the late regent, had been inoculated with all his father-in-law's hatred of the Huntly family. And the Earl of Huntly of the day was a *persona gratissima* at Court. The king's abhorrence of his uncle the regent, and of all associated with him, had thrown him into the arms of his opponent. James was one of those weak men who never can see two sides of a question. Like Philip of Spain, after he had taken up an idea he adhered to it as religiously as if it had been an article of faith. There was certainly no reason why Moray should have taken up his father-in-law's quarrel; there was still less for James to have so earnestly espoused the cause of the opposite party. But, reason or no reason, this was the position of things in the beginning of the year 1592. If it is incorrect to say that any hereditary feud existed between Moray and Huntly, it cannot be denied that their personal relations with each other were anything but friendly.

There had been some trouble between the two about certain fishings on the Inverspey, and litigation had ensued in which Moray had been successful. There had been further differences between them in connection with a certain "Johne Grant, sometime tutor of Ballindalloch," and his accomplices, "committaris of slauchter and utheris odious crymes," whom Huntly, by virtue of his commission of lieutenancy, had gone to apprehend, but whom Moray had "reset" in his castle of "Tarnway." And out of these events had sprung raids and plunderings and slaughters amongst the various clans and families in the north, which bade fair to develop into a healthy feud between the chiefs.

Rightly or wrongly, the king had taken it into his head that Moray was to blame. The crafty Huntly had left no means untried by himself or his friends to poison his mind

against him. Thirlestane the Chancellor—that “puddock-stool of a nicht,” as Bothwell called him—was equally unfavourably disposed towards him. And now the poor weak king was firmly convinced that Moray was a disloyal subject,—that he was in sympathy with Bothwell, and knew more of that consummate scoundrel’s traitorous designs than it was safe for any loyal subject to know. Yet in granting a commission, as he “incontinent” did, to Huntly to pursue with fire and sword “the Earl Bodowell and all his partakers,” he never intended—at least so Sir James Melville assures us—that Huntly should make use of it to avenge his personal quarrel with Moray. Still less was he minded that it should be employed as the instrument of a deed of treacherous savagery. For James, though weak as water, was not cruel, and he had a shuddering horror of bloodshed. Moreover, Moray had powerful friends who were doing all they could to bring about a pacification, and James was too great a coward not to feel the outburst of popular indignation, perhaps of personal violence, towards himself, that would have resulted if he had shown himself insensible to such considerations. Though, as the sequel will show, there was much that was suspicious in the king’s conduct,—though it cannot be doubted that his sympathies were with Huntly, and that Huntly believed he was doing his majesty acceptable service in ridding him of a troublesome subject,—it has never yet been proved that James was an actual participator in the Earl of Moray’s murder, any more than it has been proved that his mother was an active participator in that of Darnley. It suited the popular party in the State to assume that it was so both in the one case and in the other. The research of three hundred years has as yet been unable to make out a conclusive case against either the son or the mother.



Huntly, once armed with his commission, lost no time in acting upon it. Moray was for the moment living at his mother's house of Donibristle near Aberdour, bent on keeping out of mischief, and not without a lingering hope that his differences both with Huntly and with the king might speedily be appeased. The old grey house stands close to the sea-shore, and, like so many of the castles along the shores of the Firth of Forth, was provided with a tower and beacon-light to ward off the approach of danger. But on the evening of 7th February 1591-92 the beacon was unlighted. There was nothing to fear. The earl was within doors with his friend Dunbar of Westfield, the heritable Sheriff of Moray, and a few servants. There was no one else in the house. It was towards the gloaming,—at any rate, it was still "on fear daylight."<sup>1</sup> All of a sudden the house was surrounded with armed men. It was the earl's mortal enemy Huntly, with some scores of his retainers. A rough voice summoned the house to surrender. The demand was refused. The doors were locked, and what preparations were possible were made for a defence. It was plain that the inmates meant to sell their lives dearly. Darkness was beginning to fall. Meantime the besiegers were busy piling straw and other combustibles around the building. Before long the house was in flames. There was but one hope of safety for the imprisoned inmates, and that was to break through the ring of flames and smoke that surrounded them. But in attempting to do so, Dunbar of Westfield and some of the servants were killed. Moray succeeded in passing it in safety, and made his escape to the shore. Here, hidden among the rocks, he might have eluded the vengeance of his enemies, for the night was dark in the extreme and the flames of the conflagration were

<sup>1</sup> James Melville's Autobiography.

dazzling. But unfortunately, in forcing a passage through the burning belt, the tassels of his hood—his knapskull-tippet—were set on fire, and their light betrayed him. He was discovered, pursued, and slain. Gordon of Buckie struck the first blow. But it is said he compelled Huntly to plunge his own dagger into his victim. In those suspicious days no man was safe even from his fellow-conspirators. “Ah,” exclaimed the wounded man to Huntly as the felon blow descended on his cheek, “you have spoiled a bonnier face than your own.”

After the tragedy the party returned peaceably to Inverkeithing, where they spent the night. But as soon as might be next morning Huntly, still no doubt under the impression that he had done a commendable action, sent Gordon, the Goodman of Buckie, to Edinburgh to tell the news there. The tempest of indignation which followed the announcement surprised and terrified the messenger. Fast as horse and boat could carry him he returned to Huntly, whom, on his arrival, he found at dinner. The earl immediately rose from table and ordered his horse, and, without taking time even to pay his reckoning,<sup>1</sup> he galloped off towards Perth, *en route* for the north, where, surrounded by his family and clansmen, he knew he would be in safety.

Meantime every hour increased the excitement in Edinburgh. The Privy Council met at once, and deprived Huntly of all his commissions of lieutenancy and justiciary. The earl's disfigured body and that of his fellow-victim Dunbar of Westfield were brought over by Lady Doune, his mother, from Donibristle, and exposed in the kirk of Leith, that all men might see with their own eyes the cruel character of the murder. The streets sounded with “comoun rymes and sangs” calling for vengeance upon the perpetrators of the

<sup>1</sup> David Moysie's Memoirs, p. 185.

outrage. From every pulpit there came "the public threatening of God's judgments" against all who directly or indirectly were implicated in the affair. For by this time the notion had got abroad that there were others of even higher rank than Huntly connected with the business. It was whispered, and more than whispered, that the king himself was "linking on it." Strange stories began to be circulated,—how that on the day of the murder Huntly had been with the king and had taken leave of him under pretext of going to a horse-race at Leith; how that next morning James had fixed the scene of his hunting about Wardie and Inverleith, where he could see the still burning embers of Donibristle; how that after the meeting of the Privy Council he had at a meeting with some of the Edinburgh clergy taken pains "to cleere himself" from all participation in the affair, alleging that "his part was like David's when Abner was slain by Joab," and had even desired his clerical visitors "to cleere his part before the people"—as if a man who knew himself to be innocent had need of any one's advocacy! Nor as time went on were the suspicions of the people diminished. A proclamation of a raid for the pursuit of Huntly had indeed been made about the 11th of February, and an "armey appointit" to convene at the burgh of Perth on "the tenth day of Marche instant" for that purpose. But no one took it seriously. Every one knew, too, that Huntly's "entering himself in ward" within Blackness Castle, as he did that very day, was a mere form, and possibly, as really turned out to be the case, was a matter of arrangement between him and the king. No one was surprised, therefore, when, after a few days' confinement there, he was "freed quietlie be his majestie, and past therefra to the castell of Fyndheavin, quhair he remanit in companie with the Erle of Crafurde a certane tyme, and thereafter

was freed simpliciter, or upone cautin never fund."<sup>1</sup> Seven years later—on the 17th April 1599—James advanced him to the rank of marquis. And so the incident ended for the time.<sup>2</sup>

But it had an extraordinary sequel. The "Bonnie Earl's" son James, who succeeded him, not only married, by the express desire and indeed instrumentality of the king, Lady Ann Gordon, the daughter of his father's murderer, but, no doubt to reconcile him to such an unnatural union, obtained in 1611 a grant of the earldom of Moray in favour of himself and his heirs-male. The new charter is proof, if proof were needed, that the Bonnie Earl had never any real claim to the title.

This James was a quiet unobtrusive man, who neither courted nor attained notoriety. He died at Darnaway on 6th August 1638, and was buried next day in the little secluded kirkyard of Dyke, without any pomp, according to his own directions.

The fourth earl, also a James, was as retiring as his father. He was a Royalist, as was natural. But he lived in the country, and took no part in public affairs. He died in 1653, and was succeeded by his eldest surviving son Alexander. This earl lived in stirring times and shared in their vicissitudes. He was fined by Cromwell for his Royalist proclivities. But when the king had got his own again he received compensation for his sufferings by being appointed to various offices of importance. A Lord of the Treasury in 1678, he was Secretary of State in 1680, High Commissioner of the Parliament of Scotland in 1686, and Knight of the Thistle

<sup>1</sup> Moysie's Memoirs.

<sup>2</sup> The popular view of the affair, we need scarcely remind our readers, is that adopted in the well-known, and in all probability contemporary, ballad of the "Bonnie Earl of Moray."

in 1687. When the Revolution came, the sunshine of his prosperity once again departed, and he was deprived of all his offices. He retired to Donibristle, and died there in 1700.

Since then there have been nine Earls of Moray, exclusive of the present holder of the title.

Francis, the ninth earl (born 1737, died 1810), bitten by the prevailing mania of the day, was a great arboriculturist, and it is recorded that two years after his succession he had planted thirteen millions of trees at his three seats of Doune, Donibristle, and Darnaway, and of these a million and a half were oaks. The oak forest at his Morayshire seat is one of the features of the district. Parts of it, no doubt, are very ancient, for a forest of Darnaway existed as early as the fourteenth century; and the old Gaelic name of the parish of Edinkillie, in which two-thirds of it are situated, is said to signify "The face of the wood." But the greater part of the forest as it now exists was the pious bequest of Earl Francis to his successors—a bequest for which some of them have had reason to be thankful.

Following its sinuosities, the forest extends to nearly twenty-six miles—or about the distance from Forres to Inverness—and encloses some thousand acres of arable land. The value of the woods in 1830 was £130,000. For many years a considerable trade was carried on in oak bark, which at one time is said to have reached a price of £16 per ton. But of late years this manufacture has largely been given up, owing to the fall in prices. The worth of oak-bark is now only about £4 a-ton, which scarcely pays the cost of manufacture. The old and mistaken practice of eradicating the firs in the forest and replacing them with oaks is now fortunately abandoned; and such of the old firs as still remain—forest giants many of them, hoary with age—are protected with wise and loving care.

The earldom estates in the province of Moray are now shrunk to small dimensions, embracing an area of only about 21,669 acres in Elginshire and 7035 in Inverness-shire. It is a curious coincidence, that while the most valuable, though not perhaps the most extensive, estates of the Earls of Moray are now situated in Fife, those of the Earls (now Dukes) of Fife are to be found in Moray.

Before leaving the subject of the earldom it may be proper to explain, so far as this is possible with the very meagre materials at our command, the relation between the two offices of *comes* or earl and of *vice-comes* or sheriff.

There can be little doubt that Scotland borrowed the name of sheriff, as it borrowed those of thane and earl, from Saxon England. When the Anglo-Saxon constitution was at the height of its maturity the *gemot* (meeting) or county court of the shire—which in England was synonymous with county—was presided over by the earl in person, either alone or in conjunction with the bishop. The principal executive local office of the shire, under its head the earl, was the *scir-gerefa* or sheriff. And at its half-yearly courts he was always present in his capacity of assessor to the earl. But as years went on, and as the emergencies of the times rendered the absence of the earl more frequent, the sheriff became the presiding officer of the *gemot* as the deputy or vice-comes of the earl. Such were the functions of the sheriff in Anglo-Saxon England; and such are the functions of the sheriff in England to this day. He is a mere executive officer whose duties are to see the orders of the superior courts of justice, holden within the county, carried into effect.

But in Scotland it was different. In Scotland the Saxonisation of the kingdom, which was the be-all and end-all of Malcolm Ceanmor's legislation, was perfected by him and his immediate successors in theory only. Officers might, indeed,

be appointed with Anglo-Saxon titles. Their functions may have been intended to correspond with those of similar officials in England. But the royal authority was too weak, the districts to which they were assigned were too much wedded to their own old customs to accept them except in name. What was to be the nature and extent of the authority of the thanes, earls, and sheriffs who came into existence about this period was a matter which time alone could decide. The natural process of evolution was left to do its work.

It is impossible with any degree of certainty to trace—at least in its earlier stages—the evolution of the sheriff from a mere local executive office, the vice-comes of the earl, into a royal office embracing both executive and judicial authority of the most extensive order. It is impossible to say when, or in what way, his connection with the comes and his courts was dissevered. But if the establishment of shires—"that is," according to Sir John Skene, "a cutting or section, like as we say a pair of scheirs quairwith claith is cutted"—took place, as is generally believed, about the time of David I., the establishment of sheriffs or shire-reeves must have taken place at the same period.

By this time a new element had come into play. Saxonisation had given place, or was giving place, to feudalisation. The authority of the Crown was increasing. The notion underlying the dignity of the earldom was no longer the Saxon one, that the earl was the comrade of the king, but the Norman one, that he was the *miles*, the soldier of the sovereign.

The rights,—the jurisdiction of the earl within the *comitatus*—his regality, as they were called,—were still conceded in fact as well as in theory. But from this time forward he enjoyed the rights and he held his lands as a fief of the Crown. The loose bonds which had hitherto attached him

to his monarch were tightened. From being, like his native predecessors, a more or less independent power, bound merely by contract to discharge certain obligations towards his sovereign, he had now become a dependent authority, whose failure to perform his duties might imply—as in after years it often did imply—forfeiture of his rank and possessions.

In England, as we have seen, the shire was coextensive with the county. In Scotland there might be as many shires within the county as the king chose to create. Within the *comitatus* of Moray there were two—the shires of Elgin and Forres, and of Nairn.<sup>1</sup> Morayshire, a term more commonly used, and seemingly more agreeable to its inhabitants, than Elginshire, is both historically and legally inaccurate. Looking back upon the distinguished history of the province, however, there is much to be said for its preference.

In England the tendency was to depreciate the office of sheriff; in Scotland the reverse was the case. It may be that the king's sheriff was at first a mere executive officer whose duties were to collect the Crown dues, to execute Crown writs, and to act as coroner within the regality of the earl. But by degrees his claims to an authority, at first co-ordinate with, and very soon superior to, the earl's rights of regality, were asserted; and till these were finally swept away after the Rebellion of 1725 by the Act 20 George II. c. 50, 1767, there was a subacute rivalry between the two, which was manifested in the constant process of replegiation that went on between the two tribunals.

In accordance with the sentiment of the times the office of sheriff was a heritable one. And there was no impropriety in conferring it, as in other districts of Scotland it often was conferred, on the earl himself. But in Moray this was never the

<sup>1</sup> The word shire was also locally given to much smaller tracts of territory.



case. The offices of comes or earl and vice-comes or sheriff are never found in combination.

The first heritable Sheriff of Morayshire whose name appears on the records, though, of course, there had been many before him, is Alexander Douglas, who held the office in 1226. The first heritable Sheriff of Nairnshire of whom we learn is Andrew, Thane of Cawdor, who died in 1405. These two examples show, if further proof were necessary, how fallacious is the argument which seeks to connect the office of sheriff with that of the earl. Neither of those persons was Earl of Moray, nor had any pretensions to the dignity. Both were, however, feudal officers of high distinction. The Thane of Cawdor was constable of the king's castle of Nairn. As such he enjoyed the confidence of the king. It was probably to this, and to this only, that he owed his appointment as sheriff of the shire.

IV.

COUNTY FAMILIES OF MORAY  
AND NAIRN



#### IV.

### COUNTY FAMILIES OF MORAY AND NAIRN.

THE STORY OF THE GORDONS PROPERLY BELONGS TO ABERDEEN AND BANFF—THE GRANTS: THE FIRST SETTLEMENT OF THE FAMILY IN 1316—THEY MAKE MANY ACQUISITIONS OF PROPERTY—AND IN 1694 OBTAIN A CHARTER FROM WILLIAM AND MARY CONSOLIDATING THEIR ESTATES—SHEUMAS NAN CREACH—JOHN, THE FIFTH LAIRD—THE ROMANCE OF THE SEVENTH LAIRD—MONTROSE AND THE GRANTS—“THE HIGHLAND KING”—THE BATTLE OF CROMDALE—THE '15 AND THE '45—CULLODEN—“THE GOOD SIR JAMES”—LATER LAIRDS—THE DUFFS: THEIR ORIGIN AND ACQUISITIONS OF PROPERTY—WILLIAM DUFF OF DIPPLE—PEERS OF IRELAND—THE LATER EARLS—THE GORDONS OF GORDONSTOUN: “SIR ROBERT THE WIZARD”—THE SECOND SIR ROBERT—THE KINNAIRDS OF CULBIN: THE CULBIN SANDS—THE LAIRDS OF CAWDOR: CAWDOR CASTLE—LATER FORTUNES OF THE FAMILY—THE ROSES OF KILRAVOCK—THE BRODIES OF BRODIE.

THE three families which have exercised the most powerful influence upon local events in Morayshire are the Gordons, Earls and Marquises of Huntly and Dukes of Gordon; the Grants, Lairds of Grant and now Earls of Seafield; and the Duffs, Earls now Dukes of Fife.

The Gordons were beyond comparison the most important of the three. But though they have had for generations their principal seat, Gordon Castle, and their last resting-place, the Gordon Aisle in the cathedral of Elgin, within the county,

their position as lieutenants of the north brought them so much more closely in contact with the affairs of the adjoining counties of Banff and Aberdeen that their story more properly belongs to them than to Moray.

So often, indeed, were they out of touch with public opinion in Elginshire, especially in matters of religion, that, according to the local saying, now happily inapplicable—

“ The Gordon, the gool,<sup>1</sup> and the hoodie-craw  
Were the three worst ills that Moray e'er saw.”

If the district about the mouth of the Spey was the appanage of the Gordons, the strath or valley of the Spey belonged as exclusively to the Grants.<sup>2</sup>

In length of run the Spey holds the fourth place among Scottish rivers. The Tay comes first with a course of 120 miles, the Tweed second with a run of 105, then the Forth

<sup>1</sup> *Chrysanthemum segetum*, the yellow marguerite.

<sup>2</sup> In the Introduction to the ‘Seafield Book’ (p. xxi), to which the following pages are so largely indebted, the editor, Sir William Fraser, remarks: “The wild district of Strathspey had so long been peopled exclusively by the clan, that no landowners held possessions there who did not bear the name of Grant. When, about the middle of last century, Baron Grant of Elchies proposed to sell his estates in Strathspey, Sir Ludovick Grant was anxious to secure them, either for himself or for one of the clan. In a letter to his law agent he wrote that he wished to preserve all the lands between the two Craigellachies in the name of Grant. These two rocky eminences are conspicuous objects in Strathspey. The upper or western Craigellachie forms the dividing boundary between Badenoch and Strathspey, and was the rendezvous of the Clan Grant in time of war. The lower Craigellachie stands at the confluence of the Fiddich with the Spey, and forms the point of contact of the parishes of Aberlour, Knockando, Rothies, and Boharm. The upper Craigellachie is generally supposed to have furnished the crest of the Grant family, which is a mountain in flames. When the chief wished the clan to assemble, fires were kindled on both Craigellachies, hence the name ‘Rock of Alarm.’ The war-cry of the clan was, ‘Stand fast, Craigellachie,’ and their armorial motto is the same.”

with one of 104, and after it the Spey. According to Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, its length is about 96 miles. It takes its rise in Badenoch, about 16 miles south of Fort Augustus, and drains, according to the same authority, not less than 1300 square miles of country. Lachlan Shaw, in his history of the province, thinks it obtained its name "from the Teutonick or Pictish word *spe* (*sputum*), because the rapidity of it raiseth much foam or froath." Be this as it may, few rivers have a worse record.<sup>1</sup> Fierce, sudden, treacherous, and implacable, it is the fitting accompaniment of the wild country through which it runs.

The strath of the Spey is one of the most characteristic examples of the longitudinal valleys of Scotland. Its trend is from north-east to south-west; and, as Shaw observes, it is "inclosed to the north and west by a ridge of hills which, beginning in the parish of Urquhart near the sea, run above Elgin, Forres, Inverness, and Lochness to Lochaber. And to the south and east a part of the Grampian Mountains runneth along Strathspey and Badenoch, and several glens jutt into these mountains, which shall be described in their proper place."

To this magnificent tract of Highland country there came in the reign of Robert the Bruce, from Stratherrick in Inverness-shire, a certain John le Grant, who in 1316 obtained a grant of the lands of Inverallan on the west side of the Spey, close to the modern village of Grantown. These were the first lands on Speyside acquired by its

<sup>1</sup> The tract 'De Situ Albanie,' a MS. of the twelfth century, describes it as "magnum et mirabile flumen quod vocatur Spe, majorem et meliorem totius Scocie." Shaw ('History of Moray,' p. 11) quotes this passage incorrectly. He makes the writer, whoever he may have been, speak of the "magnum et miserabile flumen"—an epithet, however, not far from the truth.

future lords. Their next purchase, which was made about a century later, was a parcel of lands lying to the west of their existing possessions, called Freuchie, from the Gaelic *fraochach*, a word said to mean *heathy* or *heathery*. Here they erected a manor-house, which in due time—possibly somewhere about 1536—was rebuilt or enlarged, and converted into a fortalice, and from that time became the principal seat of the family. From this time also the lands of Freuchie were occasionally known by the name of Ballachastell, the town of the castle.

Their next acquisition was a large tract of wild country in the north-west of Inverness-shire. In 1509 they became the proprietors of the lands of Urquhart, Corrimony, and Glenmoriston. In 1540 they feu-farmed the lands of Strathspey from Patrick, Bishop of Moray, and in 1609 those of Abernethy in the parish of Duthil from James, the son and successor of the Bonnie Earl of Moray. These were their principal possessions, but they were not their only ones. "Earth-hunger" was so marked a characteristic of the family, that whenever a parcel of land in the vicinity of any of their more important messuages was in any way capable of acquisition, the Grants became its proprietors as a matter of course. And whenever they had acquired a new estate, their first care was to get it erected into a barony. Thus in 1493 they obtained a grant of barony of the lands of Freuchie from James IV., and similar charters for the lands of Urquhart and Corrimony from the same monarch in 1509. James VI. erected their lands of Cromdale into a barony in 1609. Similar concessions were granted to them at various times for the lands of Mulben, Cardells, and others. Towards the end of the seventeenth century their holdings had become so extensive that they felt justi-

fied in applying to the Crown for a recognition of their territorial importance. Accordingly in 1694 they resigned all their vast possessions into the hands of the Crown, and in return obtained from William and Mary a charter consolidating and uniting all their estates into "one whole and free regality," with jurisdiction to the said regality "of free regality, free chapel and chancery and justiciary, and all other privileges, immunities, profits, and duties pertaining thereto," including the power to appoint a bailie or bailies of regality "to set, affirm, hold, and continue courts within the said regality for administration of justice civil and criminal, to appoint officers of court, to call before them, try, and condemn delinquents and felons, repledge them from other jurisdictions, and to sit as judges in all actions civil and criminal except *lese majeste* and treason; 'constituting' the town formerly called Castletown of Freuchie into a burgh of regality, to be called the town and burgh of Grant" (now Grantown), with "a market-cross to be erected therein, and proclamations to be made thereat," with right of market and all other usual privileges; ordaining the castle and manor-place of Freuchie to be the principal messuage of the family, and to be called in all time coming Castle Grant; entailing the lands upon Ludovick Grant their then possessor and his heirs, and granting the designation and arms of Grant of that ilk to all such heirs of entail.

The consideration for all these extended honours and privileges was a certain pecuniary *reddendo*, and "the constant fidelity and loyalty which the said Ludovick Grant and his predecessors had manifested towards their majesties and their service, and their progenitors, in times of peace and war." These words were not entirely terms of courtesy,



though they sound oddly coming from the supplanters of the old line of Scottish kings. Yet in a sense they were true. The Grants had always been loyal to the sovereign—in their own way.

In the reign of James III. John Grant (1485-1528), the heir and grandson of Sir Duncan, first of Freuchie (1434-1485), headed the Clan Grant in its march southward to aid the king in his war against England; and even before he succeeded to the family estates he seems to have taken a prominent part in the public affairs of the district. He was one of those heads of clans whom James IV. thought of sufficient importance to attach to his interests; and he certainly rendered signal service to the Crown, not only in preserving peace within his own domains, but in bringing freebooters in other districts of the country to justice.

The defeat of James IV. at Flodden once more threw the Highlands into anarchy. Rebellion broke out. The Islesmen flew to arms and made a raid into the laird of Freuchie's country of Urquhart, carrying off, with other unconsidered trifles, "pots, pans, kettles, 'nops' [napery], beds, sheets, blankets, coverings, fish, flesh, bread, ale, cheese, butter, and other household stuff, valued at upwards of £100." Freuchie, indeed, obtained a decree of reparation against the heads of the marauders. Whether he gained anything by it may be doubted.

The next important service to the Crown rendered by the Grants was the aid they gave the queen's lieutenant, the Earl of Huntly, in suppressing the insurrection of the Camerons, Frasers, and other Highland clans in 1544. But James, third Laird of Freuchie (1528-1553), who was then their head, had to pay dearly for his loyalty. Another raid on Glen Urquhart ensued, and a large amount of property of the usually miscellaneous character was carried off. It

a raid much talked about and long remembered in the history. In Highland song and story this laird of Freuchie is well known as "Sheumas nan Creach," or James of the Grey. Yet the name may have been derived from his plundering propensities. Certain it is that he made pretensions to superior virtue in this respect.

There is a curious story told of this "Sheumas nan Creach," which may or may not be true. It is said that on one occasion he and his friend Huntly, the head of the Clans, made a raid into Deeside to avenge the murder of Freuchie's brother-in-law, Gordon of Brachally. There

a great slaughter, and many children were made orphans. Huntly, a kind-hearted man, picked out the most promising of them, male and female, to the number between sixty and eighty, and carried them with him to his castle of Strathbogie. To feed all his hungry little ones, he had a long wooden trough constructed, and this filled with provisions. On either side of it he ranged the children, then bade them fall to with mouths and hands, which they did with right goodwill. One day a richie arrived when the children were at their mid-day meal. The earl invited him to go and see the orphans feasting at their trough." The sight is said to have so affected the laird that, turning to Huntly, he told him that he had been instrumental in the destruction of their parents, it was only fair that he should also aid in the maintenance of their offspring. Sweeping away the sitters on one side of the trough, he ordered them to be taken to the spey; those on the other side he left with Huntly; and a summary process of nomenclature not uncommon in those days, no sooner had Freuchie's quota arrived on Spey than they found themselves converted into Grants, while those who remained behind became from that day Gordons.

John Grant, fourth laird of Freuchie (1553-1585), who succeeded his father, Sheumas nan Creach, was also drawn within the dangerous whirlpool of public affairs. His relations with the Huntly of the day were as friendly and intimate as had been those of his father and grandfather. He was present as one of Huntly's party at Holyrood on the night of the murder of Darnley; and after the queen's escape from Lochleven on 2d May 1568 he, with his chief Huntly, openly espoused her cause as against that of the Earl of Moray the Regent. But the party of the Kirk was too strong for them, and after the battle of Langside both the one and the other had to acknowledge Moray's supremacy.

The principal incident in the history of John, the fifth laird (1585-1622), is the dissolution of the friendly relations between the Grants and the Huntlys which had lasted for so many generations. Politics and religion were in those days so closely interwoven that anything like agreement was impossible between two men who held such opposite views in matters of faith. The discovery of Huntly's treasonable correspondence with Spain in relation to the Armada led to his taking up arms with others of the northern nobility against the Government. His rebellion was speedily suppressed. The earl himself was taken prisoner, and the powers which he and his predecessors had exercised as king's lieutenants in the North taken from him. The justiciary powers of which he was deprived were conferred by the Convention of Estates on certain commissioners, of whom the laird of Freuchie was one. Huntly's murder of the Bonnie Earl of Moray a year or two later once more brought the laird of Freuchie to the front. At the head of his clansmen, and in conjunction with the Mackintoshes, he took an active part—and in true Highland fashion—in the work of vengeance. Mutual raids be-

between the two contending parties, murders, housebreakings, spuilzies, were the order of the day. The north was "sa vrakit and schakin lowis" that these and other similar crimes went on with "far greitair rigour nor it war with forreyne enemyis." Things got so bad that the Earl of Argyll had to be sent to introduce order into the district. But in the choice of a new lieutenant for the North the Government had not been very fortunate. Argyll's defeat at Glenlivet, very much owing to his own headstrong rashness, only intensified the difficulties of the situation. At length in 1597 the Gordian knot was cut by the solemn farce of the reconciliation of the three insurgent earls—Huntly, Angus, and Erroll—to the Kirk, and their restoration to their titles and estates. Two years later Huntly was created a marquis. Moved by this signal mark of royal favour, the Grants, the Mackintoshes, the Forbeses, and others of the neighbouring clans who for the last two years had been his most deadly enemies, thought it desirable to renew their amicable relations with the now almost omnipotent "Cock of the North." Yet no one believed that such a pleasant and peaceful condition of things could endure; and it was not long before the Grants and the Gordons were at loggerheads again. We may, however, leave their tedious quarrels to the oblivion which they deserve.

Yet though he never rose to first rank as a politician, or indeed as anything else, this John Grant was a personage in his day. Strange though it may appear, he has earned the reputation of being a great peacemaker, and he stood high in the royal favour. In more respects than one he was a man after the king's own heart. Witchcraft he professed to abominate as heartily as his sovereign. And he shared the king's views as to episcopacy. So highly was he esteemed by the king, that James is said to have made him the offer of a peerage. "Then wha'll be Laird of Grant?" is reported

to have been the laird's reply. He died on the 20th September 1622.

His wife, Lady Lillias Murray, daughter of the Earl of Tullibardine, survived him for the long period of twenty-one years. She was a woman of intelligence and culture far in advance of her times. A great reader, the possessor of a good library, a poetess, or at any rate a lover of poetry, she was besides a lady of much vigour of character. Taylor the Water Poet, who visited Ballachastell in 1618, describes her as "being both inwardly and outwardly plentifully adorned with the gifts of grace and nature." But what perhaps delighted the "Penniless Pilgrim" even more, was the splendour and heartiness of his entertainment. "There stayed there four days," he says, "four earls, one lord, divers knights and gentlemen, and their servants, footmen, and horses; in every meal four long tables furnished with all varieties; our first and second courses being threescore dishes at one board, and after that always a banquet; and there, if I had not forsworn wine till I came to Edinburgh, I think I had then drunk my last."

The next laird, the son of the preceding, also a John (1622-1637), resembled his father in his peacemaking propensities only. His public life is unimportant. But the affairs of his own district gave him plenty to do. The raids of his friends and those of his own clan kept him in constant hot water, and more than once seriously compromised him. These, however, were the least of his troubles. His life was blighted by pecuniary difficulties, brought about in large measure by his profuse style of living and open-handed generosity. Yet he was hardly the spendthrift he is so often alleged to have been, and scarcely deserves the *sobriquet* of Sir John Sell-the-land which tradition has bestowed upon him. He died in 1637, and was buried in the Abbey Chapel at Holyrood.

James, seventh laird of Freuchie (1637-1663), was compelled by force of circumstances to take as prominent a part in public business as any of his predecessors. And no laird of Freuchie had ever a greater disinclination for the work. An imperturbable good nature, a strong predisposition for a quiet easy life, and, above all, an extra share of Scotch "canniness," were his chief characteristics. By means of these useful qualities he managed to steer his bark safely through all the perplexities of his times, and succeeded in escaping the shipwreck of his fortunes that so many of his contemporaries made.

Before he came of age he had seen more of life than any previous laird of Freuchie. He had travelled abroad. He had seen camps and service. He had experienced all the joys and sorrows of a love affair of the most romantic order. Scarcely was his father dead when he broke away from all the traditions of his family and declared himself a Covenanter. And a Covenanter in faith he seems to have remained to the end, though his Royalist proclivities forced him into opposition to their political action. So long as the Covenanters aimed at nothing more than a reformation of religion James Grant was their faithful servant. The moment they preferred their self-interest to their loyalty, the Laird of Freuchie cut himself adrift from their counsels and joined the party of the king. He attached himself publicly to the Covenanters in 1639; he as publicly withdrew from their company in 1645.

Perhaps an incident that intervened within these six years may have had something to do with his change of politics. This was his marriage.

On the walls of the entrance-hall of Darnaway Castle hang two portraits which at once attract the notice of the visitor, as much from the fluent grace of their execution as for the attractiveness of their subjects. The one is that of a richly

dressed lady in early matronhood. The other is that of a young girl of thirteen or fourteen. The child's picture is particularly fascinating. The fair silken hair, the dark eyes, the purity and delicacy of her complexion, the quaint dress, the tight bodice, the collar standing out from the neck like the wings of a flying-fish, the emerald jewel in her hair, the rich necklace, the jewelled cross suspended from her beautifully shaped throat, enlist and rivet the interest of the beholder. Both pictures are dated 1626, and bear the well-known inscription of the Flemish painter, Cornelius Janssen. The portrait of the lady is that of Lady Anne Gordon, daughter of George, first Marquis of Huntly, who murdered her husband's father, the Bonnie Earl of Moray; and the child is her only daughter, Mary Stewart. The resemblance to her grandfather, the Bonnie Earl, is most striking. She inherits not only his beauty but his peculiar shape of countenance. There is another portrait of Mary Stewart in existence. It hangs in the large portrait-room at Castle Grant. Few would at first sight recognise in the ringleted, full-faced matron in lace-bordered hood and tippet the ethereal child of the Darnaway picture; yet the two are the same. Only in the one case she is represented as the daughter of James, Earl of Moray, and in the other as the wife of James, seventh laird of Freuchie.

The Laird of Freuchie's marriage with Lady Mary Stewart was as romantic in its circumstances as, but more fortunate in its termination than, his previous love affair with Lady Jane Fleming, the daughter of the Earl of Wigtown. There had been a long courtship, for the alliance had been opposed, first by the lady's father, and after his death by her brother. But Lady Mary's affection surmounted all obstacles. Some of her letters have been preserved. They are full of pathos, and breathe undying constancy. "Absolutlie and only yours" (the last word spelled "*yours*," "*youris*," and "*yours*" in the

same letter) is the manner in which she subscribes herself. A prettier picture of love braving all difficulties is hardly to be found outside the pages of fiction.

At last in 1640 the steadfastness of the lovers was rewarded. Lady Mary's brother, the Earl of Moray, had occasion to go to England. Before going he established his sister in a house at Elgin. He "gave order," says Spalding, "for keiping of hir house in honorabill maner. He gave to hir the haill jewellis and goldsmith work belonging to hir defunct mother. But he keptit her poiss<sup>1</sup> himself." No sooner was he gone than the lovers married. The ceremony was performed by the minister of Abernethy, who for having celebrated it without proclamation was suspended by the Synod of Moray "from his chairge for the space of three Sabbottis."

Lady Mary, in virtue of her Stewart blood, was a staunch Royalist. In virtue of her connection with the Gordons she was also a staunch Roman Catholic. Her views on both these subjects were faiths which could not be shaken; and being a woman of strong individuality, she soon obtained a powerful influence over her easy-going husband. Though she was never able to undermine his Protestantism, she succeeded in altering his political views. From the day of her marriage the unseen hand that guided his future was that of the Lady Mary his wife.

An old MS. volume of anecdotes preserved amongst the Grant records gives a graphic picture of this extraordinary woman. It describes her as an extremely bold and peculiar person. Strangely credulous, she was a profound believer in witchcraft. Having lost several of her children in the beginning of her married life, she took it into her head that they had been bewitched, and sent for an Italian pricker to discover who were the culprits. The only result of his operations was

<sup>1</sup> Pose—that is, her treasure.



to cause the death of many innocent persons. Her Roman Catholic convictions, of which she does not seem to have made any secret, brought upon her a sentence of excommunication from the Synod of Moray. It does not appear to have harmed her even in the slightest degree. A woman who could successfully defy the thunders of so potent an ecclesiastical court must have indeed been a remarkable person.

There is the highest probability, though there is nothing more, that she had something to do in bringing about an alliance which had undoubtedly much effect upon the future fortunes of her husband. This was the marriage of his sister Mary with Lord Lewis Gordon, third son of the Marquis of Huntly. Freuchie's relations with his cousins of the house of Gordon were for the moment extremely strained, and he did not approve of the match. But Lord Lewis (who, it need scarcely be observed, is not the hero of the well-known Jacobite ballad) had the laird's mother and wife on his side, and they succeeded in overcoming his objections. It is said that Mary Grant's acquaintance with him began in a very romantic way. Owing to the part he had taken in the troubles of the period, he was for a time in hiding in a cave, which to this day goes by his name, in a rocky glen near Castle Grant. Mary having discovered this, visited him in his retreat, and herself carried supplies to the fugitive. Her kindness to him led to their marriage. It turned out both a happy and a prosperous one. Lord Lewis succeeded his father as third Marquis of Huntly, and in 1684 his and Mary Grant's son was created by Charles II. first Duke of Gordon.

After this marriage we find the Laird of Freuchie acting generally in concert with the Gordons, though with no extraordinary zeal, throughout the remainder of Montrose's gallant but futile campaign in the Highlands.

Between the battle of Inverlochy (now Fort William) on 2d February 1645, in which he so signally defeated the forces of Argyll, and thus had the Highlands at his mercy, and the disbanding of his forces by his master Charles I.'s express command on 2d June 1646, the province of Moray, including the district of Strathspey, not only saw a good deal of Montrose, but engrossed a considerable share of his attention.

After the battle of Inverlochy Montrose proceeded northwards to Inverness, and from there turned his course towards Elgin, "chargeing all maner of men" on his way "betwixt 60 and 16 to ryse and serve the king and him his majesteis liutenand wnder pane of fyre and suord." Sundry of the Moray men "cam in to him." With those who stood out he was as good as his word. The Laird of Ballindalloch's three houses, "Petcash, Foyness, and Balnadalachs," were plundered and burned; so were the "places" of Grangehill, Brodie, Cowbin, Innes, and Redhall. The lands of Burgie, Lethen, and Duffus were plundered but not burned; so was the little village of Garmouth. And the salmon-cobles and nets beside it were "cuttit and hewin doun, quhairby the water of Spey culd not be weill fishet." These proceedings naturally "bred gryte fier." The "Committe of Elgin"—a local body to whom the Estates had intrusted the safety of the district—took to flight, and many of the townspeople, with their "wyves, barnes, and best goodis," followed their example.

On the 19th February Montrose entered Elgin. The very night of his arrival he received a valuable recruit in the person of Lord Gordon, Huntly's eldest son, who, "being in the Bog" (Gordon Castle), "lap quiklie on horss, haueing Nathanell Gordoun, with sum few vtheris, in his company; and that samen nicht cam to Elgyn, salutit Montrose, who maid him hartlie welcum, and soupit joyfullie togedder." His brother-in-law, the Laird of Freuchie, had already joined the Marquis

*en route*, and sent him 300 men. Every hour of his stay in Elgin brought him some fresh auxiliary. Now it was "Lodovick Gordon," with whom we are better acquainted as Lewis Gordon, the Laird of Freuchie's brother-in-law ; now it was the Earl of Seaforth, the Laird of Pluscarden, or Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstoun—the very men who had constituted the "Committee of Elgin," and who had so dastardly taken to flight a few days before. But their adhesion was not able to save the town from punishment. Montrose indeed, on payment of 4000 merks, consented to spare it from being burned. But he would not exempt it from being plundered. The congenial duty he committed to the Laird of Grant's contingent, who, accustomed to such work, did it heartily and thoroughly. They plundered the town pitifully, says Spalding. They left nothing "tursabill" (removable) uncarried away ; and they broke down beds, boards, "insicht, and plenishing."

Leaving them to their grateful labours, Montrose with the main body of his army marched on to the Bog of Gicht. He brought with him all his new allies. Such recruits as the members of the Elgin Committee, he rightly considered, could not be trusted any further than he could see. His short stay at the Bog was one of the saddest experiences of his life ; for here he lost his eldest son, Lord Graham—a bright boy in his fifteenth year—who had accompanied him during the whole of his anxious and exhausting campaign. He was buried in the kirk of Bellie. But the exigencies of the times left the bereaved father little leisure for sorrow. Four or five days after his arrival at the Bog he was on the march again. On the 9th March he was in the neighbourhood of Aberdeen, receiving a deputation from the townspeople, promising them to do the city no harm if only he received the levies of men, arms, and horses which he demanded as being necessary for the king's service. On the

15th he was at Kintore, waiting to hear the result of the negotiations which were then in progress between himself and the Aberdonians. To Nathaniel Gordon he had committed the task of treating with the town's authorities. He was accompanied by a party of gay and gallant cavaliers, decked in their richest apparel, amongst whom was Donald Farquharson of Braemar, one of the bravest soldiers in his army. As the little band was "at their merriment" within the town, fearing no evil, they were suddenly surprised by Sir John Hurry, the commander of the Kirk's forces. Farquharson was slain; others were captured; Gordon and those who escaped lost their horses, and had to return to Kintore on foot. It is to Montrose's eternal credit that he did not, as many commanders of his time would have done, avenge this misfortune on the innocent burghers of the city.

Hurry's dashing exploit was followed by another equally daring, which, however much it may have been applauded in those days, is not likely to receive the same approbation in our own. The death of the young Lord Graham had left Montrose with only one son remaining. He was "a young bairn about fourteen years, learning at the schools" in the pleasant little town of Montrose, "attended by his pedagogue in quiet maner." With an almost incredible cruelty Hurry, knowing full well the grief which then afflicted the marquis, hastened down to Montrose, seized the poor lad and his tutor, and sent them close prisoners to the castle of Edinburgh. Thus in less than a fortnight Montrose had lost both his children. It was enough to put him beside himself.

However much he suffered—and, with his keen affections and his intense loathing of anything approaching to treachery or ungenerous conduct, his sufferings must have been intense—he never for a moment lost his self-control. Like William of Orange under very similar circumstances, he held on his

tranquil path, subordinating all his own feelings, all his own sorrows, to the higher claims of duty. He had one object before him—to assert the supremacy of the king, and, as the corollary of this, to punish the districts where that supremacy was denied. Swooping down upon Kincardineshire, he burned the burgh of Stonehaven, the town of Cowie, and the lands of Dunnottar. Then, crossing the Grampians, he fell in with General Hurry's forces at Fettercairn, about seven miles from Brechin, and chased them across the Esk. More he could not do at the time. It was wonderful that with a Highland army he had been able to effect so much. In actual battle his "Redshanks" might be gallant enough, but on the march there was no keeping them in hand. Already the Laird of Grant's men had given him the slip. We find Montrose writing to the laird from Kintore on the 16th March that not only were his men "lyke to Jacob's dayes, bade and feu," but that they had all played the run-away. And the rest of his force was little more reliable.

Amongst those who deserted him at this critical juncture was Lord Lewis Gordon. The cause of his defection has never yet been satisfactorily explained. But there is reason to believe that it may have been influenced, at least in some degree, by his father, the Marquis of Huntly, who, chafing under the supposed slight put upon him by the king in virtually superseding him in his lieutenancy of the north by the appointment of Montrose as royal lieutenant for the whole of the kingdom, was for the moment sulking in his camp. It is only fair to add that the young Lord Lewis's retirement was, like that of his father, temporary only.

We cannot follow Montrose through all his Highland campaign, vivid though it is with enthralling interest. It was the most brilliant chapter in his brilliant career. His almost audacious attack on Dundee with only a portion of his army;

his enforced withdrawal in the very moment of victory ; his masterly retreat across the hills, after a march of three days and two sleepless nights, to the lonely depths of Glen Esk ; his sudden emergence from his refuge ; his startling appearance on the Braes of Balquhiddy ; his threatened descent upon the Lowlands ; his unexpected, almost electrifying, reappearance in the north,—are beyond the scope of these pages. We must resume the narrative only when we find him once more within the boundaries of the province.

By the end of April he was at Skene in Aberdeenshire, short of powder, short of men, short of everything but courage. But his prospects were distinctly brightening. He had been joined by Lord Aboyne, Huntly's second son. He had effected a reunion with Lord Gordon, who had brought with him 1000 foot and 200 horse. About the same time Alastair Macdonnell, the celebrated "Colkitto,"<sup>1</sup> of whom we shall hear more in the immediate sequel, also rejoined him with his division. And when Lord Aboyne shortly afterwards by a brilliant exploit had procured for him twenty barrels of gun-

<sup>1</sup> Alastair MacCholla Chiotach, to give him his proper designation, was the son, as his name denotes, of Coll the Left-handed, so called from his power of wielding his broadsword with either hand indiscriminately. "Colkitto," to give him the name by which he was popularly designated, though it really belonged to his father, was perhaps the most intrepid general in Montrose's army. In Highland story and legend he appears as a veritable hero of romance. He had a hereditary feud against the Campbells, and it was that which in great measure led to his taking service under Montrose. With Lowlanders, however, his fame rests chiefly on the fact that his name forms the theme of a well-known line in Milton's poem in justification of the word "Tetrachordon" as the title of one of his political treatises. "Why is it," asks the poet, that the word "Tetrachordon" is

"harder, sirs, than Gordon,  
Colkitto, or Macdonnell, or Galasp?  
Those rugged names to our like mouths grow sleek  
That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp."

Though Milton did not know it, the three names Colkitto, Macdonnell, and Galasp (Gillespie) all belonged to the same person.

powder from the ships lying in the harbour of Aberdeen, he conceived himself to be in a position to give battle to the army of the Covenanters.

Hurry on his part, having effected a union with the northern Covenanters, was equally prepared. At Inverness he had been joined by the Earls of Seaforth and Sutherland, the Frasers of Lovat, the Brodies, Roses, and other local families of Moray and Nairn with their retainers, and he was now at the head of a force of about 3500 foot and 400 horse. Montrose's strength was undoubtedly smaller, though the discrepancy was in all likelihood very much less than is generally stated.

The battle which was to decide the campaign was now imminent. Both sides were anxious to fight. The only question was, Which was to be the aggressor? It ended by Hurry leaving Inverness with the object of attacking Montrose.

He was aware that the royal forces were encamped a little above the village of Auldearn, about two and a half miles south of the town of Nairn. The distance between Inverness and Auldearn is some sixteen miles. Hurry's intention was to surprise Montrose at daybreak, and accordingly he left Inverness in the middle of the night of Thursday the 8th May 1645. No sooner had he set out, however, than the rain began also. So heavy was the downfall that the powder in the men's muskets got "poysoned." Between four and five miles from Auldearn, accordingly, they turned down to the seaside to fire off their damp charges. But, as ill luck would have it, "the thundering report of the vollie and the suddain changeing of the wynd" carried the news to the ears of some scouts who had been sent out from Montrose's leaguer before daybreak. But for this the surprise would have been complete. As it was, there

was only time to get two regiments drawn up under arms before Hurry and his troops came in sight.

Facing the visitor as he approaches the scene of the battle from Nairn, is an irregular, almost semicircular slope. At the right extremity stands the church, and below it a piece of terraced ground, from which a wide view can be obtained of all the country round. The village of Auldearn now lies in the hollow beneath this terrace, its single street bisecting the valley in a straight line. But in those days it followed more closely the undulation of the ground, and instead of lying north and south, lay more nearly east and west.

Beginning at the left end of the hamlet, and stretching across the slope towards the west, was a turf or feal dike, now superseded by a belt of trees. The main body of his infantry, and, according to Mr S. R. Gardiner,<sup>1</sup> the whole of his cavalry, Montrose concealed behind this dike. His left flank, consisting of about 200 horsemen under Lord Gordon, he stationed at the western extremity of the slope. He had no right flank and no centre, but he placed a few men and cannon in front of the houses of the hamlet. The remainder of his troops he ordered to take up their position on the low ground to the north-west of the church, and the command of these he intrusted to Alastair Macdonell. In front of these was a tolerably level stretch of ground dotted with bushes, gradually sinking into a morass caused by the Kinnudie Burn, which came running down the western declivity of the slope. It was "a stronge ground, and fencible against horsemen." To render it more so, Macdonell's first care was to pile up brushwood in front of his position. Thus protected, he would fight at very considerable advantage.

<sup>1</sup> The Great Civil War, vol. ii. p. 224.



Montrose's plan of battle was to persuade the Covenanters to attack this position first, and when they were thus engaged to fall upon them with his main body. To induce the enemy the more readily to believe that he was present at this point in person, he gave Macdonell the royal standard. Such was the disposition of the royal forces. A modern writer has pointed out the striking resemblance it bore to the Duke of Marlborough's plan of battle at Blenheim.

Before noon on Friday the 9th May the battle began as Montrose had designed, by a vigorous assault from one of Hurry's regiments and two of his troops of horse, on Macdonell's forces. Stung by the taunts of the Covenanters, who charged him with cowardice in thus fighting under cover, Colkitto, in the teeth of Montrose's express prohibition not to leave his defences, advanced into the open. Here, however, his raw troops would not fight. As the balls whizzed past their ears they ducked their heads in terror. Some of the officers had actually to shoot one or two of them to prevent the panic becoming general. Macdonell's troops were forced to retreat towards the houses, but they fought their ground step by step. Colkitto surpassed himself in deeds of valour. He broke two swords; his targe was covered with the pikes of his enemies, any one of which "could have born down three or four ordinary men," but with a stroke of his broadsword he managed to disengage them by threes and fours at a time.

Standing on the terrace below the church, Montrose had witnessed Colkitto's mortifying blunder. He now rode off to place himself at the head of his troops, to retrieve the situation if that were possible. He had not gone far before he was joined by an orderly, who whispered to him that Macdonell was entirely routed.

"What!" exclaimed Montrose aloud, "Macdonell gaining

the victory single-handed ! Come, my Lord Gordon, is he to be allowed to carry all before him and leave no laurels for the house of Huntly ? ”

The gallant youth needed no second order. Dashing out of his place of concealment, at the head of his little troop of horse he spurred down the slope and advanced to Macdonell's assistance. It was noticed as a novelty in the style of fighting of the day that Gordon forbade all shooting of pistols and carbines by his troopers, and ordered them “only with their swords to charge quyt throwgh ther enemies.” His charge was successful. After an obstinate resistance he managed to disperse the right wing of the Covenanters, driving them off the field with the loss of four or five of their colours.

Montrose lost no time in following up Lord Gordon's advantage. Drawing his main body of foot from their ambush, he prepared to lead them in person against the main body of the Covenanters, who had now united with their second division, and were forming into line with a view to a general advance.

At this moment a very extraordinary accident threw them into disorder. Major Drummond, who, at the head of the mounted levies of Moray and Nairn, was stationed in front of the infantry, suddenly wheeled round his horse, broke through their ranks, and made off. Montrose's quick eye saw his advantage at a glance, and he immediately ordered a charge. The veterans of Hurry's army, “all expert and singularly well-trained soldiers,” fought manfully, and “chose rather to be mown down in their ranks than retreat.” But the new levies who had joined Hurry at Inverness fled for their lives. The pursuit was continued for miles, and the carnage that ensued was fearful. Hurry's loss has been estimated at 800 men ; that of Montrose was probably not a fourth of that number.

The announcement of the result of the fight was almost immediately followed by a storm of indignation on the part of the Covenanters. Considering Hurry's own great and well-deserved reputation, and his undoubted numerical superiority, it was incredible to the leaders of the party that such a crushing defeat should have been the result. Very soon whispers of foul play began to get abroad. It was asserted that Sir John Hurry had a secret understanding with the enemy; that several of his officers, especially Major Drummond, were equally compromised; that, in short, the non-success of the forces of the Covenant was the result of treachery of the basest kind. Yet, though Hurry himself not long after joined the party of the Royalists, and was ultimately hanged by Montrose's side in 1650, and Major Drummond, shortly after the battle, was convicted of having spoken to the enemy before his disastrous movement, and shot, the treason of these two distinguished officers has never yet been satisfactorily established. The withdrawal of their confidence from him by the leaders of the Covenanting party may have had a more powerful influence upon Hurry's future conduct than his supposed Royalist proclivities, even though he had undoubtedly in days gone by fought by the side of his sovereign at Marston Moor.

After his brilliant victory Montrose marched eastward, taking signal vengeance on all the local gentlemen who had supported the cause of the Covenant. The Laird of Calder's house and lands in Nairn were burned, and his goods plundered. The Earl of Moray's lands shared the same fate. And in this way, desolating the country as he advanced, he proceeded to Elgin. He arrived in the little grey town on the evening of Sunday the 11th May, and stopped there till the Wednesday following. His object was to terrorise the inhabitants out of what he considered their disloyalty. Whether

he succeeded in this or not, he at least left no means untried to accomplish it. His three days' stay in Elgin was the cruellest experience the burgh had as yet undergone. The houses of the leading Covenanters were burned and plundered right and left. The vengeance he took upon it is not forgotten to this day.

There was a special reason for his severity towards the burgh. Shortly before the battle of Auldearn, James Gordon, son of George Gordon of Rhynie, an Aberdeenshire proprietor—"a werie hopfull and gallant youth," only eighteen years of age—had been wounded in a skirmish while passing through Moray, not far from Spynie, and conveyed to a labourer's cottage hard by till his friends could remove him. Here, as he lay in his bed, he was attacked by "a party from Elgin" under the command of a son of the Laird of Innes and a certain Major Sutherland, and cruelly murdered. The horror inspired by the deed was extreme. And the incident had been used at Auldearn with good effect in stimulating the ardour of the soldiers. Now that the battle had been fought and won, summary retaliation for the cowardly act had become an actual duty. The lands of Milltown, belonging to Major Sutherland's wife in life-rent, were burned, and a like fate was accorded to the town of Garmouth, which belonged to the Laird of Innes. No one who had in any degree been concerned in the murder was exempted from punishment.

Still breathing out threatenings and slaughter, Montrose went on to the Bog of Gight. From thence he proceeded to Banffshire, meting out to the Covenanters there the same measure of retribution he had inflicted on those of Nairn and Moray. Then came the battle of Alford, in which he signally defeated the forces of "Lieutenant-General Major Baillie," the Covenanters' only other general. But "dearly was that victory purchased by Montrose"; for while in the

very act of seizing Baillie by the sword-belt, George, Lord Gordon, "the too forward heir of Huntly," as Napier calls him, "fell in the dust to rise no more." He was buried amidst universal regret in the aisle of St John the Evangelist, in the "cathedral church of the old town" of Aberdeen.

The battle of Alford was followed by Montrose's crowning victory of Kilsyth (15th August 1645), when he again vanquished the army of the Covenant. From this point his good luck seems to have deserted him. His crushing defeat at Philiphaugh on the 13th of September 1645 annihilated all his chances of success. From that moment to the end of his career Montrose was a doomed and discredited man.

One seeks, but seeks in vain, for any traces of the Laird of Freuchie during all these stirring and dangerous times. With characteristic caution, he seems to have kept aloof from taking any active part in the "troubles." Yet his sympathies were unquestionably on the side of the Royalists.

And when, after the battle of Philiphaugh, Montrose again made his appearance in the Highlands, we find him installed at Ballachastell, and from there writing to Huntly, with whom he was now acting in concert. But the laird's advocacy of the royal cause seems to have gone no further than according the rites of hospitality to its unfortunate general. Urge as he might, Montrose could not persuade him to overt action. Huntly was equally unsuccessful; so also was the Laird of Pluscarden, and George, Earl of Seaforth.

The king's surrender to the Covenanters after the battle of Naseby only confirmed the laird in his determination to keep himself aloof from danger. Montrose was actually at Strathspey when he received Charles I.'s commands to disband his forces and "to reparaire himself abroad." And though the laird subsequently appears to have sent renewed testimonies

of his loyalty, and even offers of service, to Queen Henrietta Maria and Prince Charles at St Germain's, and received grateful replies, it may be doubted whether he had any real intention of endangering his own safety had he been called upon to put his loyalty to the proof.

As time went on he began to see still more clearly the inconvenience, not to say the peril, of his Royalist leanings. He got into trouble with the Kirk; he was in imminent danger of getting into trouble with the Parliament. He was called upon by Argyll, who now ruled the party of the Covenant, to furnish a levy of twenty-three men for his regiment, and was glad to purchase a discharge by paying £40 Scots for each trooper.

In 1649 his perplexities were at a height. Montrose was engaged in making preparations for a last attempt to vindicate the supremacy of his master. A party of ardent Royalists had been formed in Moray to co-operate with him, and rumour connected the laird with the plot. General Leslie, who was then in Huntly's territory, wrote to the laird, entreating him to persuade his brother-in-law, Lord Lewis Gordon, to have no dealings with the insurgents, evidently meaning his letter as a hint to the laird himself. There is something almost piteous in the worried tone of Freuchie's reply. "Truly," he says, speaking of the conspirators, "I know not their intentiones, naither am I privie to them, and I am sorie of their rashnes, being ignorand of their wages. For my owin pairt I resolue (God willing) to keip kirk, king, and state be the hand, to quhom I wishe a suddent happie agreement." The suppression of the rising before Montrose's expedition landed in Scotland must have been to the harassed laird a happy relief.

But though Freuchie would have nothing to do with replacing Charles I. on the throne, he was ready enough to give

public expression of his devotion to the monarchy by joining with the Estates in welcoming Charles II. to his native shore. When the king landed from Holland at Garmouth, at the mouth of the Spey, on the 3d July 1650, there is little doubt that the Laird of Freuchie was among those who greeted his arrival.

The story of the king's reception is thus graphically given by Sir Thomas Dick Lauder in his work on the Morayshire Floods: "The vessel which brought Charles to Scotland could not come into the harbour, but rode at anchor in the bay whilst a boat was sent to land the king. The boat could not approach the shore sufficiently near to admit of Charles landing dry-shod," whereupon a man of the name of "Milne, wading into the tide, turned his broad back to the king at the side of the boat, and resting his hands on his knees, very quietly bade his majesty 'loup on.' 'Nay, friend,' said the king, smiling, though somewhat alarmed at the proposal; 'I am too great a weight for so little a man as you.' 'Od! I may be little of stature,' replied Milne, looking up and laughing in Charles's face, 'but I'se be bound I'm strong an' sturdy, and mony's the weightier burden I've carried in my day.' Amused with the man, and persuaded by those around him that there was no danger, the king mounted on Milne's back and was landed safely on the boat-green." The descendants of this man, who have been distinguished ever since by the appellation of King Milne, were in possession of their celebrated ancestor Thomas Milne's property at least as late as 1830.

The actual spot at which the king was set ashore is now part of the village of Kingston,—a name derived, not, as the historian states, because it was the landing-place of the king, but from certain wood-merchants from Kingston-upon-Hull, who purchased the timber of the forest of Glenmore from the Duke of Gordon in the early part of the present century.

On his arrival at Garmouth the unfortunate king was taken to a house in the village which was only demolished in 1834, and there, as a condition precedent to his recognition, was forced to sign the Solemn League and Covenant. His miserable experiences as a covenanted king belong to national rather than to local history.

Sometime after Charles II.'s landing we find the Laird of Freuchie appointed to the colonelcy of the infantry to be levied in Moray and Nairn, and on the laird's own lands, to oppose Cromwell's progress into Scotland. But the laird was too long-headed to associate himself with any project which might bring him into trouble, and we find him accordingly handing over the command of these levies to his brother Patrick with the title of lieutenant-colonel, and so washing his hands of the business. No doubt he foresaw more clearly than his neighbours that Cromwell's progress was not possible to be prevented, at least by such untrained and undisciplined troops as a local levy was able to provide. At the same time, it would have incurred suspicion had he absolutely refused the proffered command. Whatever else the laird may have been, he was beyond doubt the incarnation of "canniness and caution."

Yet when the occupation of Scotland by the troops of the Commonwealth actually ensued, General Monck had so little confidence in his loyalty that he stationed, at any rate for a time, a garrison in Ballachastell. The laird, indeed, was allowed to retain his arms for defensive purposes, and was also permitted to have six horses and his breeding mares above the value prescribed by law. But in return for these privileges he was compelled to give bonds in large sums for the peaceful behaviour of himself and his tenants.

In 1662 came the Restoration. And once again we find the laird siding with the party, for the moment, in power.



Nobody really trusted him. His policy had been all along too much like that of the Vicar of Bray to commend itself to any side. Yet he was clever enough to escape, if not suspicion, at any rate prosecution. And he was even able to persuade Charles II. that, as was possibly true, he had been a consistent Royalist all his life. It is said the king intended to confer upon him the titles of Earl of Strathspey and Lord Grant of Freuchie and Urquhart, and that the royal intention was only frustrated by the laird's death at Edinburgh in September 1663 before the warrant could be signed.

The next Laird of Freuchie was his son Ludovick (1633-1716), widely known through all the surrounding district by the title of "the Highland King." He owed the nickname to the Duke of York, afterwards James II. In 1681 the duke came to Scotland as Lord High Commissioner for his brother Charles II., and in that capacity presided over the sittings of the important Parliament which declared the National Covenant and the Solemn League and Covenant to be unlawful, and imposed a Test, which was a solemn profession of Protestantism as contained in the Confession of Faith, on all persons holding office either under the Crown or under corporations. In this Parliament the Laird of Grant sat as one of the members for Elginshire. He had no objections to the principles of either the Declaration or the Test. But at one of the meetings at which the latter measure was under discussion he ventured to dissent from the view of the majority, that the Test should be offered "to the electors of commissioners for shires to the Parliament"; and not only voted against it, but desired that his dissent should be recorded. On this the duke, rising from his seat, is said to have exclaimed, "Let his Highland Majesty's protest be marked." The tradition may

Or may not be true, but there is nothing improbable in the story. For by this time the influence which the Lairds of Grant were able to bring to bear upon public affairs was not only considerable, but every day saw it extending.

The abolition of the Covenant and the imposition of the Test were almost immediately followed by the adoption of stringent measures against all suspected of Nonconformity in any degree. On the 30th December 1684 a commission was appointed to "take order" with the Nonconformists of the north. The commissioners were the Earls of Errol and Kintore and Sir George Monro of Culrain. Their powers gave them authority to prosecute all persons guilty of church disorder and other crimes in all the bounds betwixt Spey and Ness, including Strathspey and Abernethy, and their first meeting was appointed to take place at Elgin on 22d January 1685. Their arrival in the Episcopal town was attended with every circumstance of dignity and solemnity. Lord Duffus with a troop of militia, both horse and foot, the sheriffs of the neighbouring counties, the entire body of the clergy, accompanied by their elders and "bedrals," and all the heritors of the district, assembled to do them honour. According to Wodrow, the first act of the commissioners was to cause "erect a new gallows *ad terrorem*," and though happily they had never any cause to use it, no doubt it had the desired effect. None of the Presbyterians of the district had been present at Bothwell, or had been guilty of anything inferring the capital punishment which would have ensued on a conviction for "rebellion." But, on the other hand, there were few against whom charges of neglect of ordinances, or of attending conventicles, or of intercommuning with outed ministers, could not be successfully brought. Altogether about 250 persons of all classes of society passed through the commissioners' hands. Ministers like James

Urquhart, John Stewart, Alexander Dunbar, and George Meldrum, who had preferred to relinquish their cures rather than submit to what they considered the oppressive acts of an oppressive Government, merchants, tradesmen, portioners, many women of every rank in life, had to suffer fine or imprisonment for conscience' sake. But it was chiefly upon the landed gentry of Moray and Nairn, who were almost to a man favourably disposed towards the Covenanters, that the hand of the commissioners fell most heavily. The "curates," as they were called, who had been imposed upon the parishes at the restoration of Episcopacy, were very far from being acceptable to the more intelligent classes of the community. Not only were they looked upon as renegades, but they were men of greatly inferior character and ability to those whose places they had taken. It was dissatisfaction with their new spiritual pastors rather than any deep-rooted objection to Episcopacy which had driven the landed gentry into opposition to the Government. Most of them were staunch Presbyterians, and had as little leaning towards any other creed as the commissioners themselves.

This was especially the case with the Laird of Freuchie. No sounder Protestant, no more faithful Presbyterian, existed within the province, yet both he and his wife were cited to appear before this inquisitorial commission. The charges against them were, that they had had dealings with outed parsons, and had withdrawn from the ordinances, or, in other words, had given up attendance at the parish kirk. The first of these charges they would seem to have successfully refuted; the second they confessed. Both were found proved against them, and the monstrous fine of £42,500—the heaviest fine inflicted by the commission—was imposed upon the laird for his own and his wife's delinquencies. At the same time a fine of £40,000 was

inflicted on Brodie of Lethen, the Laird of Grant's father-in-law, for similar offences, and other members of the same family shared the same fate. His brother, David Brodie of Pitgaveny, was fined £18,722 and imprisoned in Blackness. Another brother, James Brodie of Kinloss, was fined 200 merks. His cousin, Francis Brodie of Milton, was fined £10,000, and Francis Brodie of Windiehills 5000 merks. The young Laird of Brodie, who no more than his late father, Lord Brodie, the well-known Judge of Session, would "keep his own parish church," was fined £24,000 Scots. The Brodies, however, had themselves to blame for this severity. For years past they had taken an active part in the propagation of Covenanting principles in the north.

In the following year (1686) the Laird of Freuchie's fine was remitted, largely in consequence of his services to the Government subsequent to its imposition. But he had cause to remember the commission all the days of his life; for it not only cost him £24,000 to get his fine remitted, but he had to advance his father-in-law £30,000 to assist him in the payment of his.

The death of King Charles II. on 6th February 1685 cut short the work of the commission. But the accession of James II., far from diminishing the sufferings of the country, only tended to aggravate them. If the Government of Charles had chastised the Nonconformists with whips, that of James II. chastised them with scorpions. "The killing-time" was in full force; and James Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, the executioner of the Government, was at the height of his bloody labours.

And to trouble in connection with religion was soon to be added trouble in connection with the occupation of the throne. On the 5th November 1685, William, Prince of Orange, who

had married Mary, the daughter of James II., landed at Torbay to assert the rights of Protestantism as against the re-establishment of Roman Catholicism, with which the three kingdoms were now threatened. It was followed by the flight of his father-in-law. And on the 4th April 1689 the Convention of the Estates of the realm, then sitting in Edinburgh, found and declared that King James, being "a profest Papist," and having infringed the laws and liberties of the nation in connection with Protestantism, and for other high crimes and misdemeanours, which were narrated at length, had "forfaulted the right to the Crown, and the throne had thus become vacant." This was succeeded a few days later by an offer of the crown of Scotland to William and Mary, then King and Queen of England, France, and Ireland. Their subsequent acceptance of the offer completed the Revolution in Scotland.

To all these proceedings the Laird of Grant had been a consenting party. His Protestant convictions had forced him to sacrifice the loyalty which he and all his ancestors had so freely accorded to the old race of Scottish kings. From this time forward he was as devoted an adherent of William and Mary as in days past he had been of the Stewarts.

Towards the end of April 1689 Dundee began his famous campaign in the Highlands on behalf of the late King James II. Sometime during its course he appears to have visited the now ruined Castle of Duffus, about five miles north of Elgin, as the guest of its proprietor, James, second Lord Duffus, a Jacobite of the staunchest order. An old servant of the family, who only died in 1760, had a lively recollection of his visit. She used to tell how she brought the claret from the cask in a timber stoup and served it to the company in a silver cup. Dundee she described as a swarthy little man, with keen lively eyes and black hair tinged with grey, which he wore in locks which covered each ear, and were rolled

upon strips of lead twisted together at the ends. His death at the battle of Killiecrankie on the 27th July 1689 was a blow from which the Jacobite cause never recovered. It did not, however, put an end to the campaign. It dragged its slow length along, first under Colonel Cannon, and afterwards under General Buchan, till the following spring, when it was brought to a decisive close by the battle of Cromdale.

It shows to what a vanishing-point the hopes of the rebels had come, that such an insignificant affair should put an end to a movement which at first threatened to be so dangerous. The Jacobite force under General Buchan numbered no more than 800 men ; the Government troops under General Livingstone amounted to only 1200 horse and foot.

On the night of the 30th April 1689 General Buchan and his Highlanders, on their march towards the country of the Gordons where Buchan hoped to obtain reinforcements, encamped on the Haughs of Cromdale, a stretch of flat land on the southern bank of the river Spey about a mile south-east of the village of Grantown. When passing Ballachastell in the course of the day, they had been observed by Captain John Grant of Easter Elchies, the commander of the garrison posted there. He immediately sent to inform General Livingstone, who with his little army, of whom 300 belonged to the Clan Grant, happened to be posted at no great distance. Livingstone at once put his force in motion. It was two o'clock in the morning before he arrived at Ballachastell. His men were tired with the eight miles' march ; the hour was late ; the night was dark. But Captain Grant, taking the general to the top of the tower of the castle, pointed out to him the enemy's force, and advised an immediate attack, offering himself to be their guide. Livingstone called his officers together and sent them to their respective detachments to inquire if the men were able to bear a little more fatigue.

Having received an enthusiastic answer in the affirmative, he had refreshments served out, and gave the order to march in half an hour. Their first intention was to cross the river at the ford below Dalchapple, but they found it guarded by 100 of the enemy. Leaving a small detachment to engage their attention, they proceeded to another ford about a quarter of a mile lower down, and here they crossed without difficulty. The surprise which ensued was complete. Four hundred of General Buchan's troops were killed or taken prisoners, and but for a dense fog which rested on the summit of the hills and prevented Livingstone's dragoons from following up their advantage, the carnage would have been much greater.

Such was the battle of Cromdale. Though the Laird of Grant was not himself present, his clansmen, with a considerable degree of propriety, chose to regard the victory as their own. And the well-known song which commemorates the event is regarded to this day by members of the clan as only a fitting tribute to their prowess. To this day it is said that the spirit of Hamish the piper, who in their hour of direst extremity encouraged his countrymen to fight, and who afterwards died by a random shot as he was playing their coronach, is still to be seen hovering over the Haughs, terrifying the farmers, as they return from the Grantown market, with his pale and blood-stained countenance, and beckoning to them, with shadowy hand, to follow him to the spot where his slaughtered comrades lie.

During the whole of this anxious campaign the Laird of Grant had not only acted loyally with, but had been of invaluable service to, the Government. And the grant of regality conferred upon him four years later was only the fitting record of his services. But with the termination of the military operations came also the termination of the laird's military career. From that time to his death he continued

serve the Government, but in a way better suited to his abilities. In his place in Parliament, in his office as sheriff, no one did more useful work; though it is said that as an executive officer of justice he was somewhat inclined to take the law into his own hands. There is a tradition that on one occasion "a gentleman of the name of Macgregor, driving a 'spraith' from the laird's country," was apprehended and carried prisoner to Inverness. Influential friends of the prisoner threatened the laird that if Macgregor was convicted a Grant's head should fall for every finger on both his hands. The laird's reply was, that if found guilty the man should hang though a hundred heads should be lost on both sides. Macgregor was convicted and sentenced to death. But on his way to execution there came an express with a reprieve. Without opening the paper the laird inserted it between Macgregor's neck and the rope, and promptly hanged both at the same time.

Another famous trial of the day in which the laird was also interested was "the process against the Egyptians," tried before the sheriff of Banff on the 7th November 1700 and following days. Patrick Broune, Donald Broune, James Macpherson, and James Gordon were indicted as being the leaders of a band of gipsies who for some time past had been going "up and doune the country armed," "oppressing the lieges in ane bangstrie (disorderlie) manner," and not only thieving themselves, but acting as "receptors of thieves." "It was quite a familiar sight at a market in Banff, Elgin, or Forres, or any other town in the district, to see nearly a dozen sturdy gipsies march in with a piper playing at their head, their guns slung behind them and their broadswords by their sides, mingling in the crowd, inspecting the cattle for sale, and watching bargain-making, in order to learn who were receiving money." The band numbered about thirty




in all, and included women as well as men. Hitherto they had successfully defied the law. It was now to be decided whether they or the law was the stronger.

The proceedings began by the Laird of Grant taking exception to the jurisdiction of the court in the case of the Brounes, on the ground that they were tenants of his, and that in virtue of his right of regality he was entitled to repledge them from the sheriff's authority. The objection was repelled. The case went to proof, and all the four panels were found guilty and sentenced to death. Public opinion, however, did not ratify the sentence, and without the concurrence of public opinion few sentences in those days could be carried into effect. The personal popularity of Peter Broune, the leader of the band, and of James Macpherson was so great that their fate excited considerable sympathy. Peter Broune, through the Laird of Grant's influence, obtained a reprieve on his signing an act of voluntary banishment for life from Scotland, and it is thought that Donald Broune also escaped. The laird's failure to make a similar effort on behalf of Macpherson exposed him to considerable obloquy. According to a broadside of the period—

“ The Laird of Grant, that Highland saint,  
Of mighty majesty,  
Did plead the cause of Peter Broune  
But let Macpherson die.”

But Macpherson had influential friends of his own, who, if they had chosen, might have exerted themselves as warmly in his behalf as the laird did in behalf of the Brounes. For though born of a gipsy mother, he is said to have been the illegitimate son of a member of the family of Invereshie. He is described as having been a man of great strength and beauty of person, distinguished by his skill in the use of arms, and not without a knowledge of more useful arts, such as



medicine. He had, in short, many of the qualifications for a popular hero; and as such he has been accepted by tradition. Readers of Burns will remember the pathetic lines which the poet wrote to the tune which Macpherson is said to have composed in prison while under sentence of death; and Sir William Fraser, the editor of the 'Seafield Book,' states that Sir Walter Scott intended to "introduce him into the pages of fiction." But the whole romantic story of his behaviour on the way to execution—how

" Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,  
Sae dauntingly gaed he ;  
He play'd a spring, and danc'd it round,  
Below the gallows-tree ;"

how he offered his cherished violin to any one in the crowd who would accept it, and finding none who would accept it, finally broke it across his knee—has no substantial basis. The fact that a similar tale is told of another masterful highwayman in Ireland, who was also a Macpherson, does not tend to induce credence in the pathetic ending of the Banffshire gipsy.

Though he was not a very old man, the anxieties of the times had told upon the laird, and in 1710 he resolved to resign the leadership of the clan in favour of his son Alexander. His abdication of the chieftainship is one of the most striking, and at the same time most touching, incidents in his career. On the day appointed for the ceremony all the members of the clan, "gentlemen as well as commoners," appeared at Ballintome, their ordinary place of rendezvous, all "wearing whiskers," by Alexander Grant of Grant's order, all in kilts "with plaids and tartans of red and green," and all under arms. When the men were drawn up in order the old laird addressed them for the last time. He told them that owing to his years he was no longer able to command them as

formerly, and he had therefore decided to hand over the leadership to his son, who, he said, they would see, promised as well as, if not better than, he did. Then turning to his son, "My dear Sandy," he said, "I make you this day a very great present—namely, the honour of commanding the Clan Grant, who, while I commanded them, though in troublesome times, yet they never misbehaved, so that you have them this day without spot or blemish. I hope you will use them as well as I did, in supporting their public and private interests, agreeably to the laws of liberty and polity as are now happily established in our lands. God bless you all."

This was the last public act of the Highland King. He died six years afterwards, in November 1716, and was buried beside his father in the Abbey Church of Holyrood.

His son Alexander, who succeeded him, was Laird of Grant for only three years (1716-1719). He was a cultured and accomplished man, who began life as a lawyer and ended it as a brigadier-general. As a member of Parliament for Inverness-shire he was one of the Commissioners appointed to bring about the Treaty of Union with England, and in consequence incurred much odium with the Elgin people, who were almost to a man opposed to the measure. He kept himself and his clan loyal through all the perplexities of the Old Pretender's attempt to regain the crown for the Stewarts, and died in 1719, after a short though honourable and useful life.

The Rising of 1715 never seriously endangered the loyalty of either Moray or Nairn. A few of the gentry in both counties were induced to join it. But on the whole the district stood firm in its adherence to the Hanoverian cause, though it suffered severely from the exactions of both parties. There was scarcely a man of any means who had not cause to regret the forced levies of arms, horses, or forage which were made

upon him. Looking at the evidence we possess, it would almost seem as if the Government demands upon the loyalty of the district were heavier than those of the "rebels."

Amongst those who espoused the cause of the Old Pretender, none was more enthusiastic than the Laird of Altyre. Whether he was acting on his own or by superior authority does not appear, but on 14th September 1715 he sent a party of Highlanders to the house of Robert Tulloch, town clerk of Forres, who wakened him out of his sleep, dragged him from his chamber, and forced him to proclaim James VIII. at the town cross of the burgh. For this he was promptly suspended by the town council. But on the 1st May 1716 he presented a petition to the council, fortified with the depositions of witnesses, praying for reinstatement in his office on the ground that he had been compelled to act "contrair to his inclination." The eloquent appeal which he made on that occasion is not yet forgotten. He pled the penury to which he had been reduced by the loss of his office, his previous faithfulness in the discharge of his duties, the fact that the town was then in possession of the rebels, his well-known loyalty to King George, his alarm at being "waukened" in the middle of the night, and his sufferings in being "trailled by force" to the cross "as if he had been ane malefactor." "'Twas ill arguing," he said, "with a Highlander's dirk at yer throat." It is satisfactory to think that his eloquence was successful, and that the council "in one voice reponed him" on his taking "the Abjuration and the other oaths appointed by law."

Alexander Grant's younger brother James (1719-1767), who succeeded him as sixteenth laird, married Anne Colquhoun, the heiress of Luss, and was the first baronet of his family. The circumstances under which he obtained the dignity were peculiar. His father-in-law, Sir Humphrey Colquhoun, was anxious that the title should descend to his son-in-law failing

the heirs-male of his own body. Accordingly in 1704 he resigned his baronetcy into the hands of the Crown, and obtained from Queen Anne a new patent regranteeing the baronetcy to Sir Humphrey and his sons to be born, and failing them, conferring the dignity on James Grant and the heirs-male of his body by Anne Colquhoun. On Sir Humphrey's death in 1718 James Grant succeeded to the dignity, and became Sir James Colquhoun of Luss. In 1719 his brother Alexander died, and James succeeded to the estates of Grant. He immediately dropped the name and arms of Colquhoun of Luss and resumed his paternal surname of Grant. This was in terms of a clause in the entail executed by Sir Humphrey Colquhoun, which provided that the estates of Luss should never be held by a Laird of Grant. For a time also he dropped the title of baronet, but he afterwards resumed it, and continued to hold it till his death.

Though Sir James Grant was alive at the breaking out of the Rebellion of 1745, it was his son Sir Ludovick (1767-1773) who controlled the action of the clan through all that difficult time. In spite of many temptations, and still more difficulties, the Grants adhered to their traditionary policy of loyalty to the Government in possession. And though they had more than once occasion to complain of the way in which they were treated by King George's officers, their steadfastness to the Hanoverian cause was never for a moment in doubt.

Ludovick Grant's first intimation of the Rising was contained in a letter which he received from Robert Craigie of Glendoick, the then Lord Advocate of Scotland. It was dated the 5th August 1745, and it informed him that "the Pretender's eldest son" had embarked "near to Nantz, in Bretagne, on board a French ship of 64 guns," attended

with "another of 25 guns, having on board 70 gentlemen guards and 300 volunteers, with arms and ammunition, with a design to land in Scotland, where it was expected he would be joined by the Highlanders." Mr Grant was requested to keep a sharp look-out, and endeavour to discover if there were any motions in the Highlands in consequence of these reports. The information was somewhat exaggerated, but there was a solid basis of truth in its contents. Before it was written Charles Edward had been already twelve days on Scottish soil. On the 23d July he had landed, after a long and tedious voyage of over a month, on the secluded little island of Eriskay, one of the Hebrides, between Barra and South Uist, and he was now in the Moidart district of Inverness-shire. A few days later Sir James Grant received a letter from the Prince himself, dated Kinlochiel, August 22, 1745. In that letter, which was the same as he addressed to other heads of clans, the Prince, after remarking that Sir James could not be ignorant of his having arrived in Scotland, of his having set up the royal standard, and of his firm resolution to stand by those who would stand by him, expressed the hope that he would see Sir James "among the most forward." The laird, without unsealing the letter, handed it to the Marquis of Tweeddale, then Secretary of State. Meantime, until the clan was actually called out by the Government, he advised his son to remain passive, only taking up arms if their own lands were in danger.

By this time Sir John Cope was on his way north to meet the rebels. Ludovick Grant at once wrote him offering the assistance of his clan. The offer was not accepted, and the Grants were left to defend their own country as best they could. The result was a certain coolness between them and the royal officers, which, though it never interfered

with their loyalty, prevented them from co-operating heartily with the royal troops to the end of the campaign. As no enemy made his appearance, Sir John Cope, after remaining some little time in Inverness, resolved to embark his troops at Aberdeen for the south.

A curious incident of this march to Inverness is recorded by a local historian. On the morning of his arrival at Nairn the wife of a fisherman presented her husband with a son, who, in commemoration of the event, was christened John Cope Main. Descendants of this infant are still to be found among the fishing community of Nairn. They still bear the name of Main Cope, or Coup.

The startling success of the Prince which almost immediately ensued, his capture of Perth on the 4th September, which it is said he entered with only a guinea in his pocket, his triumphant entry into Edinburgh, his defeat of Cope at the battle of Prestonpans on the 21st of the same month, and his subsequent march towards London, did little to shake the loyalty of Moray and Nairn. A Jacobite party was indeed formed, but it embraced few men of note within the district. The magistrates of the burghs, the ministers of religion, all who had any stake within the county, with very few exceptions, remained faithful to their posts. This was in great measure owing to the influence which such men as the Lord President, Duncan Forbes of Culloden, the Laird of Grant, the Earl of Findlater, the Laird of Kilravock, and others of the county gentlemen, were able to exert. In the Gordon district about Fochabers and Enzie, where Roman Catholics abounded, the Prince no doubt had many adherents. Though the duke himself remained neutral, his brother Lewis, the hero of the pathetic Jacobite ballad, had thrown himself soul and body into the Prince's cause.

But it was not until the Prince actually made his appear-

ance in the district that the Government had any cause for alarm. Then indeed their apprehensions were justified. For the Prince's personal influence had hitherto been found almost irresistible.

The failure of the Rising had indeed been practically assured by the retreat from Derby (5th December 1745); but the fears of the Government were not yet allayed. Not until the "unnaturall rebellion," as they chose to regard it, was finally stamped out, did they consider that they could sleep in safety. The end of the campaign, accordingly, was marked by an activity on the part of the Government which had been sadly wanting at the beginning.

The scene now changes to the north.

After the battle of Falkirk (17th January 1746) the suppression of the insurrection had been committed to the Duke of Cumberland; and on 31st January he left Edinburgh, with a strong force, with the object of finally extinguishing it. The Prince's army was for the moment engaged in a vain attempt to capture Stirling Castle; but on learning of Cumberland's advance it made a precipitate retreat to Crieff.

Here the Prince divided his troops into two columns. With the one, which was composed entirely of Highlanders, and was under his own command, he took the Highland road through Blair Atholl to Inverness. The other, which was to follow the coast-road by Montrose and Aberdeen, he committed to the charge of Lord George Murray.

On the 16th February the Prince slept at Inverlaidran, near Carr Bridge, then part of Morayshire. His hostess was Mrs Grant of Dalrachny, whose husband was a strong Hanoverian. Here he met with but sorry entertainment. His Master of the Household, finding himself short of bread, ordered his servants to bake some; but Lady Dalrachny stopped them on the plea that she could not allow any



such thing to be done in her house on a Sunday. Not content with this, "she spoke some imprudent and impertinent things to Mr Gib—viz., 'What a pack ye are! God let me never hae the like of ye in my house again,'" &c. Next day the Prince went on to Moy Hall in Inverness-shire, where he received very different treatment. While there he had a narrow escape from being captured.

It having come to Lord Loudoun's ears that the Prince was travelling with a very slender escort, he sent a party to take him prisoner "in his bed at Moy Hall." Old "Lady MacIntosh," however, the mother of his hostess and the Prince's constant "benefactrice," who was then living at Inverness, heard of this, and at once despatched "Lachlan MacIntosh," a boy of "about fifteen years of age," to warn the Prince of his danger. On his way the lad fell in with Lord Loudoun's troops. He found it impossible to pass them without risking discovery, and accordingly lay down "at a dyke-side" till they had gone by. Then, taking a short cut, he "arrived at Moy about five o'clock in the morning; and though the morning was exceedingly cold the boy was in a top sweat, having made very good use of his time." The scene that ensued is graphically described by Mr Gib, the Prince's Master of the Household: "Mr Gib upon the alarm, having been sleeping in his clothes, stept out, with his pistols under his arm, and in the close he saw the Prince walking, with his bonnet above his nightcap and his shoes down in the heels, and [young] Lady MacIntosh [his hostess] in her smock-petticoat, running through the close, speaking loudly, and expressing her anxiety about the Prince's safety." Fortunately the alarm had been given in time. The Prince "marched two miles down the country, by the side of a loch," and there he hid till the danger was over.

Meantime Lord Loudoun's men were on their way back to

Inverness. They had been put to flight by a very clever stratagem. When they had come within a mile or so of Moy they were perceived by a blacksmith and four other men, who were keeping watch on the moor "with loaded muskets in their hands." As the party approached, the five men fired their pieces and shot "Macleod's piper, reported the best of his business in all Scotland, dead." Then raising their voices, they pretended to summon the Prince's army to their assistance, "calling some regiments by their names." The darkness favoured their deception, and Lord Loudoun's party, imagining that the Prince's whole army was in the neighbourhood, immediately beat a retreat. Such was the incident known in Highland history as the Rout of Moy.

On the 18th February the Prince was at Castlehill. The same day his army entered Inverness, Lord Loudoun and his men marching out the moment they saw the Highlanders approaching it.

Lord George Murray, with the Prince's second column, had by this time got no farther than Elgin. According to a complaint presented at a later period to the Government by Sir Richard Gordon of Gordonstoun, "the rebels came into the shire of Murray upon 16th February 1746, where great numbers of them remained until the 11th Aprill thereafter, both inclusive." Sir Robert, who was a firm adherent of the established form of Government, seems to have fared badly at their hands. He himself was taken prisoner and conveyed from Gordonstoun to Elgin, where he was detained for ten days, and then sent on to Inverness. In his absence Lord George's troops played havoc with his property. They requisitioned his forage; they set their horses to eat his "pease-stack"; they shot his pigeons; they turned Lady Gordon and her children and servants out of the house, and quartered themselves within it; they

carried off his "pork, hams, dry fish, books, &c." Horses they were particularly anxious to obtain. But Sir Robert was able to save his "labouring horses" by secreting them in a cave at Covesea. Though his complaints were louder than those of his neighbours, Sir Robert was probably no worse off than many another gentleman of the shire. Before many days were over the whole district between the Spey and the Ness was in the Prince's hands, and his Highlanders, after their wont, "took toll" of friend and foe indiscriminately.

On the 11th of March the Prince marched eastward into Moray, where he spent eleven days. For the most of the time he lived in Elgin, but before returning to Inverness he paid a short visit to Gordon Castle.

In Elgin he lodged in Thunderton House, "a noble-looking mansion with a square tower and balcony," now converted into a temperance hotel. It was a house with a history. Originally known as "The King's House," for some cause not now ascertainable, it had come in later times to be called "The Sheriff's House," from its having been the town-house of James Dunbar of Westfield, heritable Sheriff of Moray. At the time of the Prince's visit it was occupied by Mrs Anderson of Arradoul, a daughter of Archibald Dunbar of Newton, whose first husband had been Robert Gordon, grandson of Sir Ludovick Gordon of Gordonstoun, and whose second had been Alexander Anderson of Arradoul in Enzie. She was now a widow for the second time. Mrs Anderson was ardently devoted to the Jacobite cause. It is said that she carefully preserved the sheets in which the Prince had slept, and at her death, which occurred twenty-five years later, was buried in them. Here the Prince was seized with a feverish cold, and for two days was in serious danger. But after bleeding—the usual remedy of the day—had been applied, he recovered, which, as a contemporary writer expressed it, "caused a joy in every heart not to be expressed."

The Prince returned to Inverness on the 25th March. On Saturday the 12th April he paid a visit to Kilravock.<sup>1</sup> The laird was none of his adherents ; on the contrary, he was a strong supporter of the Government. But the Prince was kindly received and remained to dinner. The Prince charmed his host and hostess by his affability. He asked to see their children, kissed all the three of them, and praised them for their beauty. Then perceiving an old violin, he asked the laird to play him a tune. Kilravock, who was an accomplished musician,<sup>2</sup> played an old Italian minuet, remarking, when he had concluded, that he believed it was a favourite with his Royal Highness. "That it is so, Mr Rose," returned the Prince, "is certain ; but how ye come to know this I am at a loss to guess." "That, sir," replied Mr Rose, "will serve to show you that whatever persons of your rank choose to do or say is certain to be noted." "I thank you, sir," said the Prince, courteously, "for your observation." While dinner was being prepared the laird asked the Prince to walk out and see his grounds. Observing the laird's workmen busily planting, the Prince remarked, "How happy you must be, Mr

<sup>1</sup> This date is assigned on the authority of the following entry in the Prince's Household-Book : "To Lady Kilrac's servant and Mrs Donin's do., 2s." Hitherto it has been generally assumed that the incident occurred the day before Culloden—namely, Tuesday the 15th April. Family tradition, on the other hand, assigns it to the Monday (14th April). But as all accounts agree as to the details of the visit, and as these seem irreconcilable with the behaviour of a general who well knew that on the following or next to following day he was about to fight the battle which was to decide the campaign, we have preferred to adopt the date given by the generally very accurate Mr James Gib, the Master of the Prince's Household.

<sup>2</sup> See the "Kilravock Papers" in Professor Cosmo Innes's 'Sketches of Early Scottish History,' p. 465. A "dancing set" of the "Ewie wi' the crooked horn" (the whisky-still), "a strathspey hitherto imperfectly known," is given in Captain Simon Fraser's 'Airs and Melodies of the Highlands of Scotland and the Isles' as having been "formed a century ago by three neighbouring gentlemen in Nairnshire, eminent performers—Mr Ross of Kilravock, Mr Campbell of Budyet, and Mr Sutherland of Kinsteary."

Rose, to be thus peacefully engaged when the whole country around you is in a stir." The laird's reply to this pregnant observation has not been recorded.

The party at dinner consisted only of the Prince, his secretary, Hay of Restalrig, and his host and hostess. It took place in what is now the parlour of the old castle. Forty of the Prince's attendants dined in the large hall adjoining. The short passage between the two rooms was guarded by two of the Prince's officers with drawn swords.

When the cloth had been removed, the laird requested the Prince to allow these gentlemen to go to dinner, observing "that his Royal Highness might be satisfied that he was quite safe in this house." "I am well assured of that," replied the Prince; "desire the gentlemen to go to dinner."

As the Prince and his host sat over their wine, the secretary suggested that the laird's famous punch-bowl, which was said to be able to contain sixteen bottles of liquor, should be filled. It was promptly done, "and the Prince in gay humour insisted that as Mr Hay had challenged the bowl, he should stay and see it emptied." The prudent secretary, however, declined to do more than take a single glass; and shortly after, the Prince and his party took their leave and returned to Inverness.

Meantime the Duke of Cumberland, who had been watching the Prince's movements as a cat does a mouse, was on his way to meet him. His march from Aberdeen had been delayed by the flooded state of the Spey, but on the very day of the Prince's visit to Kilravock he succeeded in fording it a little east of Speymouth manse, with the loss of only one man. That night the duke slept at the manse of Speymouth. "The rebels," says the minute-book of the kirk-session of Speymouth, "retreated at his approach."

On Sunday the 13th he passed through Elgin without stop-

ping, and encamped that night on the Moor of Alves. The duke himself took up his quarters at the manse. Next day the march was resumed. Between Findhorn and Nairn the duke's forces sighted "a body of the rebels, who at once took to flight," and as Ray, a volunteer officer in the duke's service, expressed it, "we had a fine hunting-match after them." As they approached Nairn, Lord John Drummond with a strong party of the Prince's troops attempted to oppose the duke's entrance to the town. There was a short tussle, but it was speedily brought to a close by the appearance of the main body of the Hanoverian army. This was the only fighting which took place during the Rising either in Moray or Nairn. The duke's forces, which numbered about 7000 foot and 2000 horse, with a train of artillery, then entered Nairn. The little town was totally unable to supply accommodation for so large a body of men.

Part of the troops were lodged in the tolbooth and other buildings. The old Buffs bivouacked on the haugh on the east side of the river; but the main body had to march to Balblair, about a mile west of the town, where they formed a camp. The officers for the most part found quarters within the town. The duke himself was accommodated within Kilravock's town-house in the High Street. The manse, Rose of Clava's town-house (now the Caledonian Hotel), and the houses of the principal inhabitants, had all their quota of welcome or unwelcome guests. The long narrow street was ablaze with the gay uniforms of the soldiers, and guards patrolled the town from its one end to the other.

Next day (Tuesday the 15th) was the duke's birthday, and he accordingly remained at Nairn, with the double purpose of resting his men and celebrating the anniversary. The wild revelry of the festivities which took place is not yet forgotten in the district. While Cumberland's troops were thus en-

gaged, those of the Prince were employed, twelve miles distant, in selecting a position for the battle which both parties were well aware was imminent. The Prince with his whole force, numbering about 5000 men, had marched out from Inverness to Culloden the day before. Here they spent the night, the Prince sleeping at Culloden House, the property of Lord President Forbes, and the men bivouacking on the parks around. Next morning (Tuesday, 15th April) the Prince led his army to Drummoissie Moor. It is a wild shelterless waste on the borders of Nairn and Inverness-shire, about a mile and a half south of the mansion-house of Culloden. The river Nairn runs through it on the south. On the opposite side of the river is a narrow boggy haugh; and beyond this a high abrupt ridge, sloping down towards the north—an outwork, so to speak, of the great Highland region behind.

Obviously this moor was the destined battle-field. The only question was, which was the best position for the Prince's troops to take up. Lord George Murray and others of his more experienced officers were of opinion that they should avail themselves of the natural advantages of the ground and encamp on the ridge; but the Prince overruled them. Such a position, he thought, would leave Inverness exposed, and Inverness he conceived to be the key of the situation. It was a fatal mistake, as afterwards turned out; but there was no gainsaying the Prince's opinion. A site on the other side of the river was accordingly selected, almost in a straight line south of Culloden House. Later on in the day it was suggested by Lord George Murray that a night attack on the duke's camp at Nairn might be a successful enterprise. There was a good deal of discussion about it; but the Prince was keen for it, and though the troops were in a half-famished condition, owing to the failure of their supply

of bread, it was finally resolved upon. Towards nightfall the expedition started in two columns. The first, consisting of the clans, was under the command of Lord George Murray; the second, composed chiefly of Lowland regiments, was led by the Duke of Perth. The Prince with his staff was between the two. The two columns were to pursue their march by different routes, so as to threaten the English army from different sides. But the attack was to be made simultaneously, and the hour fixed for it was two o'clock in the morning. The darkness of the night, however, the roughness of the road, and the exhaustion of the men from want of food, hindered the march, and at the hour appointed for the assault Lord George was still three miles from the Duke of Cumberland's camp. A halt was called and a hurried consultation took place. "The roll of a distant drum indicated that the English camp were on the alert." It was decided to give up the attack and retrace their steps. The Prince, who was in the rear, was very angry when he learned the decision, and military writers have agreed with him in calling in question the propriety of Lord George Murray's judgment. There was, however, no help for it, and with the depressing consciousness that a bold and hopeful design had miscarried, the hungry, jaded army once more took the road to Culloden.

At five Cumberland's troops were in motion. The duke had slept at Balblair the night before, so as to be ready to start with his soldiers. And as he had learned from his spies that some sort of an attack upon Nairn had been intended, he had taken care to see that not only was each man's arms and ammunition ready by his side in case of a hurried call, but that he had been provided overnight with a liberal allowance of brandy, biscuit, and cheese.

If tradition is to be trusted, the duke called in at Kil-



ravock in passing. The laird came to the gate to receive him.

"You have had my cousin Charles here," is said to have been amongst the duke's first observations.

"Not having an army, sir, to keep him out," replied the laird, "I could not prevent him."

"You did perfectly right," returned the duke, "and I entirely approve of your conduct."

By this time the Prince's wearied troops had succeeded in reaching Drummossie, and had taken up their position a little farther west from the one selected on the previous day. It was a cold boisterous morning, with intermittent showers of snow and sleet, which caught the Highlanders in their faces. But the field looked like a review. Many of the ladies of the neighbourhood had ridden out to see the fight. By eleven both armies were in sight of each other.

Shortly after, the battle began. There was one heroic charge of the Highland clans in the teeth of a blinding hail-storm. They succeeded in breaking the first rank of the enemy. But the galling fire of Cumberland's rear rank and of that of a strong body of men under Colonel Wolf, stationed *en potence*—that is to say, in flank—was too much for them, and in a few minutes the Highlanders lay dead in piles three and four deep.

Such was the battle of Culloden ; and such was the end of an enterprise which at first appeared likely to change the history of the kingdom. The Hanoverian succession had escaped, but it had escaped almost by a miracle.

Amidst all "the distemper of the times," in spite of repeated temptations, Ludovick Grant had been able to maintain the loyalty of his clan. The Grants had taken no prominent part in the struggle, but they had been very useful in preserving order within their own district, and in lending a moral, and

even at times an actual, support to the Government. Still, Ludovick Grant had done little deserving of any special recognition at its hands, and in fact he received no other reward for his services than thanks.

On the death of his father, Sir James, in 1747, Ludovick Grant succeeded to the family estates, and also to the baronetcy in terms of Queen Anne's re-grant of 1704. He resigned his seat in Parliament, which he had held for twenty years, in 1761, and died at Castle Grant on the 18th March 1773, after an illness of only eight days.

The next laird, James Grant (1773-1811), was Sir Ludovick's only son. He "was one of the most amiable of his race, and is still affectionately remembered in Strathspey as 'the good Sir James.'" Though when he first succeeded to the Grant estates he found them much encumbered in consequence of the demands made upon his predecessors in connection with the troubles of his times, and was forced to sell a considerable portion of his lands, he was able to found the village of Grantown as the capital of his Strathspey estates; he tried to establish a similar one, to be named Lewistown, for his properties in Glen-Urquhart; he raised a regiment of Fencibles to assist in defending his country when France declared war against Britain in 1793,<sup>1</sup> and in the year following another regiment for more extended services, which was embodied at Elgin, and soon afterwards incorporated with the 42d or Black Watch; he was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Inverness in 1794, and in 1795 General Receiver and Cashier of Excise in Scotland. His sister Penuel married Henry Mackenzie of the Exchequer in Scotland, the author of 'The Man of Feeling'; and, armed with a letter of introduction from him, Robert Burns visited Castle Grant in

<sup>1</sup> A portrait of Sir James as colonel of the Grant Fencibles will be found in Kay's 'Historic Portraits,' vol. i.

226 LAIRDS OF GRANT BECOME EARLS OF SEAFIELD.

1787. The poet found Strathspey "rich and romantic," and described Lady Grant, who was the daughter and heiress of Alexander Duff of Hatton, as "a sweet pleasant body."

The nineteenth Laird of Grant was Sir Lewis Alexander (1811-1840), eldest son of "the good Sir James." He was an advocate of the Scottish Bar; was provost of Forres, like his father and grandfather before him; and member of Parliament for Morayshire. In October 1811 he succeeded to the title and estates of Earl of Seafield, as heir of line, in right of his grandmother, Lady Margaret Ogilvie, daughter of the fifth Earl of Findlater and second Earl of Seafield. On his succession to the peerage, King George IV. advanced his sisters to the same rank which they would have attained had their father lived to be Earl of Seafield. And of Lady Anne, the eldest of the seven, an amusing story is told.


In 1820 an election of a member of Parliament for the Elgin Burghs took place. The candidates were Mr Farquharson of Finzean, who was supported by Lord Seafield, and General Duff, who was backed by Lord Fife. The burghers of Elgin were strongly in favour of General Duff. Lord Seafield with his three sisters, Anne, Margaret, and Penuel, were then living at their town house, Grant Lodge, Elgin. The ladies, especially Lady Anne, were keen politicians. The interest they took in the struggle was strongly resented by the people of Elgin. They could scarcely appear in the streets without being annoyed by the rabble.

Meantime the excitement in the election increased daily, and before long both sides began to adopt tactics which were as unusual as they were unjustifiable. The Grants began by attempting to kidnap two of the most prominent of General Duff's supporters. The Fife party retaliated by seizing Robert Dick, one of the town council, who belonged to the Grant interest, and carrying him off to Sutherland.

The Grants replied by capturing the acting chief magistrate and transporting him across the Firth to join his fellow town councillor. The position of affairs was growing so serious that the ladies at Grant Lodge began to have grave fears as to their own safety. Accordingly a messenger was despatched to Strathspey to inform the clansmen of the treatment to which Lady Anne and her sisters were being subjected. What followed reads like a legend of the seventeenth century. The fiery cross was sent round, and in a very short time an army of Grants, some hundreds strong, was marching to the deliverance of the sisters of their chief.

When they saw the dreaded Highlanders actually entering the grounds of Grant Lodge, the fears of the burghers were of the most abject nature. The Fife tenantry were no doubt in the town, armed with bludgeons, old swords, and all the other weapons they could command. But even these protectors were not sufficient to allay their terrors. The vagaries of the hot Celtic blood when roused were too well known in the past. If they got drunk, if they imagined themselves insulted, as they were sure to do, nothing short of the sack of the town was to be apprehended. So critical was the situation that it is said the provost of Elgin slipped into Grant Lodge by a back entrance and besought Lady Anne on his knees to spare the town, and send the Highlanders back to Strathspey. His entreaties, backed by a deputation consisting of the sheriff of the county and all the parochial clergy, were successful.

After Lady Anne had received assurances that the peace of the community would be preserved, and that she and her sisters would be subjected to no further molestation at the hands of the townspeople, she consented, and accordingly that afternoon her bodyguard left. The Elgin people,




however, were not satisfied. Nothing could persuade them that the Highlanders were not lurking in the woods, meaning to return as soon as darkness fell. They determined to illuminate the town, so that no stranger could enter without being perceived, and to watch all night. No enemy, fortunately, appeared. After the election, which of course resulted in the return of Mr Farquharson, the Seafield candidate, the kidnapped town councillors were restored to their afflicted families; and so the incident, which is known in local history as "the Raid of Elgin," ended.

The Laids of Grant who have succeeded to the title have worthily maintained the ancient traditions of their family. In 1858 a peerage of the United Kingdom was bestowed upon John Charles, twenty-first Laird of Grant and seventh Earl of Seafield, with the title of Baron of Strathspey. The present Earl of Seafield is the twenty-sixth chief of this loyal and ancient clan.

No reliable work on the history of the Duffs, Earls now Dukes of Fife, exists beyond the Memoirs of the Duff family compiled by William Baird of Auchmeddan, a connection of the family, rather more than a century ago. The materials, therefore, for a sketch of their career are meagre in the extreme. This is the more to be regretted, because the story of a family which has risen by successful prosecution of the arts of peace has an interest for modern readers which is often found wanting in those of others which have achieved their distinction through the arts of war.

The history of the Duffs is really one of the fairy tales of commerce.

After an obscure though honourable existence for more than four hundred years as small landowners, farmers, lawyers, merchants, and general traders in Banffshire and



**M**orayshire, they are suddenly ennobled without having rendered any special services to Government, and without passing through any of the intermediate steps which are the usual precedent to a peerage. From that moment they are found in possession of a social and political influence capable of competing on equal terms with that of the Lairds of Grant, whose predominance in the district had been the outcome of the careful labour of generations. In little more than a hundred and fifty years they have distanced all rivals, and are able to aspire successfully to a connection with royalty itself.

Gentry the Duffs have always been. There is a tradition in the family that they are in some way or other descended from Macduff, Thane of Fife, and the legend has been perpetuated by their adopting Macduff as their second title. But their descent had never any influence on their fortunes. The position which they have attained they owe to their own industry, frugality, and sagacity—in short, to those qualities which go to make up the successful man of business.

The first of the family of whom we hear is John Duff, who was proprietor of the lands of Muldavit, near Cullen, and died in 1404. Its next noteworthy member is Adam Duff (1598-1674) of Clunybeg, in the parish of Mortlach, Banffshire, who was "a very shrewd and sagacious man," and as farmer, merchant, and trader "dealing in all country produce," accumulated considerable wealth. His frugality is said to have been so great that he made his own creels for carrying manure; hence the nickname of "Creely Duff," by which he is still known in local history. He was a great Royalist, and was fined by the Covenanters in consequence. His two sons, Alexander and John, fought under Montrose, and had their own share in the troubles of the times.

Alexander made a rich marriage and got 100,000 merks

(£5000) of tocher with his wife, who was a daughter of Alexander Grant of Dallachie. He was wadsetter of the lands of Keithmore, and died in 1700.

Alexander Duff of Braco succeeded his father Keithmore, but survived him only five years. He had an extra share of the family shrewdness and carefulness of money.<sup>1</sup> He had spent some years in the office of a Writer to the Signet in Edinburgh, and when he returned to the country in 1675, he was possessed of a stock of legal knowledge, mainly of feudal law, which he found very useful to him in the future. Close to his father's property of Keithmore lay the estate of Balvenie, an ancient barony which had belonged to the Comyns, the Douglasses, and the Atholls respectively, and was now the property of Arthur Forbes, a brother of Alexander Forbes of Blacktown. Forbes had been at one time a trooper in the Guards; but he had managed to "adjudge" the property, which was heavily burdened, from Lord Salton, its last proprietor. To obtain the means to do so he had himself borrowed largely. And among his creditors were Keithmore and his son Braco. Forbes was not only a man of no capital, but his business capacity was small. Keithmore and his son had long coveted the property; and by dint of buying up all his other creditors' debts, they were soon in a position to treat him as he had treated Lord Salton. In 1687 Balvenie was adjudged to Braco, and although Forbes attempted to set aside the transaction, his death, seven or eight years later, left Alexander Duff in undisputed possession of the estate. Braco was for many years the representative of Banffshire in the

<sup>1</sup> An amusing story of his parsimony was told by his nephew, Duff of Hatton. "A sturdy beggar having heard that he had picked up a half-penny from the street of Banff, came up to him craving an alms and saying, 'God bless ye, Braco; gie's a bawbee, an' if ye winna gie's a bawbee o' your ain, gie's the bawbee that ye fand.' 'Find a bawbee for yourself,' says Braco."

Scottish parliament, and was a strong opponent of the Union. He was a man of vehement impulses, and it is said that on one occasion he drew his sword and drove one of his friends into a corner, threatening to "head him like a sybow" for venturing to differ from him on some political matter. He died in 1705.

It was, however, Keithmore's second son, William Duff of Dipple, who was the true founder of the greatness of his family. At the eastern extremity of the High Street of Elgin, close to the Little Cross, is a small, harled, whitewashed house, with gabled attic windows, and the date 1694 inscribed on one of them. This was Dipple's office for the last nineteen years of his life. His business was principally that of a banker and money-lender, but he had a large interest in the active trade which then existed between Holland and this district. There was hardly a cargo of "Aberdeins or Elgin pladin, allmed leather, salmond, tallow, winter foxes, otters," or other "country product" shipped at Findhorn, or a consignment of Rhenish wine, sack, tobacco, spices, "muslen," or "mowrning creapp" landed there, in which Dipple was not concerned. He, his uncle William Duff, provost of Inverness, with whom he learned his business and whose partner he afterwards became, and Sir James Calder of Muirtoun, are said to have carried on almost all the foreign trade north of Aberdeen. His investments in land were on the same extended scale. They were almost all in Morayshire, to which he was much attached, and for the most part in the neighbourhood of Elgin. The lands of Dipple, Pluscarden, Coxton, Quarrywood, and Sheriffmill were all purchased by him; nor did these exhaust the list of his acquisitions.

In 1718 he succeeded to the estate of Braco under very sad circumstances. On the death of his brother William it had descended to his son, also a William Duff. He was a man



of considerable culture, who loved books, and had studied the Civil Law at Leyden. But he had fallen victim to the snares of a pretty face, and had married "Helen Taylor," a very honest, respectable woman, though she "had wrought a harvest with John Durno, at Premnay, for which she had got four merks and a pair of shoes." Helen did her best to make him a good wife. But she was no companion for a man of his tastes. He tried for a time to find solace in foreign travel, but without avail. He returned to Scotland in 1716, and two years later committed suicide in the castle of Balvenie.

Dipple had started in life with a younger son's patrimony of only £500; but he had used it to such advantage that at his death in 1722 the rental of his heritable property was £6500 a-year, and not only were his estates unencumbered, but he left behind him £30,000 in cash.

None knew better than his only surviving son, William, who succeeded him, and in his early years had been wont to scour the country on his "powney" collecting his father's debts, how to employ this vast fortune. But if he made largely, he expended freely, purchasing political influence wherever it was to be found, and at whatever price it was to be obtained, within the district. He had a taste for magnificence and building. The melancholy associations now connected with the old castle of Balvenie induced him to build a new one at a spot lower down the Fiddich. And he also, between the years 1740-43, erected Duff House, close to Banff, at a cost of £70,000—an enormous sum in those days—as the principal seat of the family.

In 1735 he obtained the reward for which he had been quietly working all his life. He was created a peer of Ireland with the title of Lord Braco of Kilbryde, Co. Cavan. Twenty-five years later he was advanced to the dignity of Viscount

Macduff and Earl Fife in the same peerage. He died in 1763, aged sixty-six.

James, second earl (1729-1809), inherited all the characteristic traits of the family. He was as keen a politician, as extensive and as judicious a purchaser of land, as bent on securing local influence, and as indifferent to the cost, as his father. He was a great agriculturist and improver, and planted about 14,000 acres of barren ground. George III. conferred a peerage of the United Kingdom upon him with the title of Baron Fife. But as it was limited to the heirs-male of his own body, and he died without issue, the title died with him.

Alexander Duff of Echt, the third earl, was the younger brother of Earl James. He was an advocate of the Scottish bar, and succeeded to the peerage when he was seventy-eight years of age. He held it for only two years, and was succeeded in 1811 by his son James, who was born in 1776.

James, the fourth earl, was a major-general in the Spanish army during the Peninsular War, and was wounded at Talavera. In 1827 he was advanced to the dignity of a peer of the United Kingdom with the same title which had been possessed by his uncle. But, as in the case of the previous Baron Fife, the English honours expired with him. This earl was as ardent a politician as his two immediate predecessors, and as unscrupulous in the means which he used to attain his object. During the contested election of 1820, which ended in the "Raid of Elgin," he presented rings, dresses, shawls, and bonnets to the wives of all the tradesmen, and spent enormous sums in the entertainment of the lower classes in the town. He mixed much in the fashionable world, and was a personal friend of George IV.

He was succeeded in the Irish peerage by his nephew,

James, fifth earl of Fife, who in 1857 was created Baron Gordon Skene in the peerage of the United Kingdom. He died in 1879.

His son, Alexander William George, sixth earl, was created an earl of the United Kingdom in 1885, and advanced to the dignity of Duke of Fife and Marquis of Macduff in the same peerage on the occasion of his marriage with the Princess Louise, eldest daughter of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, on the 27th July 1889.

A family which, though it never attained to historic rank, has impressed itself strongly on local history and tradition, is that of the Gordons of Gordonstoun. Its founder was Sir Robert Gordon of Kynmonowie, second son of the twelfth Earl of Sutherland, whose wife, a daughter of the Earl of Huntly, was divorced by her first husband, Bothwell, to enable him to marry Mary Queen of Scots. Sir Robert was the first person created a Baronet of Nova Scotia by Charles I. in 1625, an honour which was accompanied with a grant of 16,000 acres of land in that colony, but for which he had to pay 3000 merks, or about £166 sterling. He was a gentleman of the bedchamber to the king, and afterwards sworn of the Privy Council, and he is well and meritoriously known in literature as the author of a 'History of the Earldom of Sutherland.' His daughter Catherine married Colonel David Barclay of Ury, and was the mother of Robert Barclay, the author of the 'Apology for the Quakers.'

It was, however, Sir Robert, the third baronet, who is responsible for the very peculiar, indeed eerie, interest which attaches to the family name. His fame as a wizard was as widely spread over the north of Scotland as was that of Major Weir over the south. The popular conception of his character

acter is nowhere better expressed than it is by William Hay, the local poet, in the "Lintie of Moray":—

" Oh ! wha hasna heard o' that man o' renown,  
The wizard, Sir Robert of Gordonstoun ?  
The wisest o' warlocks, the Morayshire chiel,  
The despot o' Duffus an' frien' o' the Deil !  
The man whom the folks o' auld Morayshire feared,  
The man whom the friens o' auld Satan revered.  
Oh ! never to mortal was evil renown  
Like that o' Sir Robert of Gordonstoun ! "

Wild and picturesque legends cluster round his name. Like Michael Scott, it was thought that he had learned "the art that none may name" in Italy, and, like him, had lost his shadow in acquiring it. In a lower chamber, still pointed out, of his mansion-house of Gordonstoun,<sup>1</sup> he is said to have fitted up a forge, and here night after night for seven long years he sat watching the glowing embers, until at length his patience was rewarded by the appearance of a live salamander. From this creature he tortured many an unearthly secret. But his choice familiar was the arch-enemy of mankind himself. Often in the long winter evenings the belated traveller on his way to Elgin would see the windows of the house lighted up, and would hear sounds of ribald merriment proceeding from within which made him shake in his shoes. And when the wine had mounted into the heads of both, his guest would change himself into a coal-black charger ; his host would mount on his back ; the next moment they were on their way through the window to join the revels of the witches in the old kirkyard of Birnie, seven or eight miles distant.

<sup>1</sup> The house was greatly enlarged in 1730. It now consists of a central block with two wings, each with corner turrets, the whole forming one edifice, whose principal characteristics are its great size, its great ugliness, and its still greater gloom. It is about five miles north of Elgin. It faces the north, and is almost buried amongst magnificent old trees.

On more than one occasion Sir Robert is said to have put the fiend's friendship to the test. One winter night, having occasion to go to Elgin, he determined, by way of short cut, to cross the Loch of Spynie, which was then frozen over. But his old coachman, Alexander Philip, remonstrated with him, calling his attention to the fact that the ice was so thin

"that it maunna be pressed,  
For it yields to the wecht o' the water-fowl's breast."

Sir Robert's only reply was to bid his servant sit steady and not look behind him. The man obeyed till the vehicle had almost touched land, when his curiosity overcame him. He gave a quick look round. He saw a big black "corbie" fly off the back of the carriage. The next moment carriage and horses alike were hopelessly bogged.

More blood-curdling, however, than any of these is the legend of Sir Robert's death. He had sold his soul to the devil, and on a certain night at the stroke of midnight, as he was sitting drinking with his boon companion the parson of Duffus, the fiend appeared to take possession of his prize. But Sir Robert, in anticipation of his visit, had put the clock half an hour back, and pointing to the dial, ordered his enemy to be gone till the time was up. No sooner had he retired than, on the advice of his friend the parson, who assured him that if he could gain the kirkyard of Birnie he would be safe from the fiend's clutches, Sir Robert ran out, and taking a back-way in the hope of deceiving his enemy, who would no doubt take the direct road by Elgin, he set off at full speed for the sanctuary. On his way he met the parson of Birnie, who was returning from a clerical meeting at Alves, and asked him if he was on the right road to his destination. Having been

assured that he was, Sir Robert divested himself of his coat and waistcoat, and again began to run. Very soon after he had parted with Sir Robert the parson was met by a black, gruesome-looking figure seated on a black horse foaming at the mouth, with two blood-hounds running by its side. On being asked if he had met any one on the road, the parson replied in the negative, and the rider continued on his way. He had scarcely been gone many minutes when unearthly shrieks were heard piercing the cold and silent air. At that moment the horse and its rider reappeared, and across his saddle-bow hung the dead body of Sir Robert, with one hound hanging on to his throat and the other to his thigh. "So you thought to deceive me," said the fiend; "but I have not missed my game. Had you told me the truth, no harm would have befallen you. As you have lied to me, prepare for a similar hunt at the same hour to-morrow." At twelve the next night the sound of a bugle was heard; the parson bolted out of his house, and next morning was found dead in a ditch at some distance from the manse.

Such is the legendary Sir Robert. But legend has in this, as in so many other instances, done its subject grievous injustice. The real Sir Robert was one of the most accomplished men of his day. Born in 1645 or 1646, the eldest of a family of five sons and two daughters, he appears to have had his education abroad. He may have studied, and in all likelihood did study, at one of the Italian universities, where the occult sciences were then much cultivated. Certainly it was neither in Scotland nor in England that he acquired that knowledge of chemistry—or, as we should now call it, alchemy—and mechanics, which distinguished his after-life, and is said to have brought him the honour of a correspondence with the celebrated philosopher Robert

Boyle. His education completed, he returned to Scotland, bringing with him the greater part of that magnificent library whose several transmissions form one of the most curious incidents in bibliopolic history. It numbered nearly 3000 volumes—a large number for the library of a private gentleman in those days—and among its contents were many rare and costly works, chiefly in the departments of theology and history. It was purchased by Constable in 1801 for a very small sum. It was sold by him shortly afterwards to John Clerk, afterwards Lord Eldin, for a not much higher price. It was repurchased by Constable from Clerk for £1000 and a pipe of port, and was finally dispersed in London in 1814 by J. G. Cochrane, a bookseller in the Strand, when it realised £1530. In the catalogue of this its final sale there is, strange to say, hardly a single work on any subject relative to “the black arts”; “but it is believed,” says Mr Thomas Constable, “that before the sale some curious works had been withdrawn.”

We catch a pleasant glimpse of Sir Robert in London in 1686, in the diary of that valiant and most amusing soldier of fortune, General Patrick Gordon of Auchleuchries; and it is curious how, indirectly, it corroborates the popular idea of the baronet's close-fistedness. The general has just arrived from Russia, and is “doing” London, and noting each day in his diary how he has spent his time. On the 16th May 1686 he writes: “At night we did meet with some friends at a tavern, and were very merry, where, contrar to expectation, Sir Robert Gordon payed the schott.” And, incidentally also, the same acute observer gives us an inkling of the business which had brought Sir Robert to England. “According to my ordinary custome,” he writes under date April 22, 1686, “I went and waited on the king at his walking in the Park. The king caused try a new

invention of the pompe made by Sir Robert Gordon ; but some things breaking therein, it took no effect." The king was James II., who had been Lord High Admiral of England ; and the "pumpe" was "a curious machine for raising of water" on board ship, which was subsequently "tried in the fleet and highly approved of, and found far to exceed anything of that kind then known, both for the facility of working and the quantity of water it discharged." Oddly enough, in two letters from no less a personage than Samuel Pepys, Secretary to the Admiralty, we learn more about the ingenious invention of the Morayshire laird. It never made his fortune—as no doubt, like other inventors, he expected it would do—and the Admiralty never purchased the secret. But the king paid all the expenses of the experiment, and there the matter apparently ended.

It says a good deal for Sir Robert's common-sense that he never seems to have placed any faith in those vain imaginings about the philosopher's stone and the transmutation of metals with which the other alchemists of his day—not even excepting his friend Robert Boyle—deluded themselves. On the contrary, anxious though he was to make money, he endeavoured to do so only by the legitimate exercise of his talents, and by the ordinary modes of business. Throughout the whole of his life he appears to have had a keen eye for the main chance. In 1679, while he was yet only "younger of Gordonstoun," we find him chartering the good ship *Penelope* of Pittenweem from Alexander Atcheson, its skipper, for a voyage to Drunton (Trondhjem) in Norway with grain, returning with a cargo of "daills" (deals). And in the same year he entered into an agreement with Magnus Prince, "present Thresour of Edinburgh," for the sale of 500 bolls of bear at the price of five merks per boll—payment to be made, half in cash, and half in sack, French wine, and iron.



And prosperity seems to have attended all his speculations, or he must have been an excellent manager of his patrimonial estate ; for he was able not only to support a considerable family, but to purchase from the ancient family of Cumming of Earnside the lands of Garbity, Inchberry, and Ely, and the valuable fishings in the Spey thereto belonging—properties which continued in his successors' possession until 1812, when they were excambed with the Duke of Gordon for part of the lands of Roseisle.

Much of the stigma which attaches to the legendary Sir Robert is due to his being so constantly confounded with his son and successor, whose Christian name was the same. Gloomy, austere, litigious, and irascible, his whole life, if we may believe tradition, was a protest against all the Christian virtues. He was always in hot-water with somebody. He quarrelled with his neighbour, Dunbar of Newton, and to spite him ploughed up the sand on a piece of poor ground whenever the wind was in the east, that it might blow upon his neighbour's land ; but as the west is the prevailing "air" in those parts, Newton was able to repay him with interest. He detested his wife ; and relying on a superstition of those days, that if a man wished his wife to die he had only to erect a pigeon-house, he built no fewer than four dovecots upon his land, but without success.

These, however, were mere eccentricities compared to his treatment of his inferiors. It was in his relations with his tenants and dependants that his real character was disclosed. In 1740 we find him calling the minister of Duffus a liar. In 1751 he thrashed John Gow's wife for trespassing on his land. And in a memorial to the Court of Session in 1740, by the friends of Alexander Leslie, a tenant on his estate, we get a glimpse of the manner in which he exercised his baronial jurisdiction. "Leslie was dragged and carried a

prisoner to Gordonstoun," it says, "and put in a prison, which, in place of being a civil prison, is a most nasty dark vault, with an iron grate, having neither door, window, nor chimney, and where he lies in a cold and most miserable condition, and is in much danger of his life, for if it were in winter-time, he behoved to have a foot or two of stones for keeping him from the water, because the vault is underground about two feet. . . . The following facts are informed on, which if necessary can be proven—viz., Janet Grant, servant to James Forsyth in Crosshill, was without reason put into the pit at Gordonstoun, who died in a short time after coming out. Margaret Collie, spouse to Alexander Grant in Muir of Drainy, was incarcerated without any warrant, for taking the head of a ling out of a midden or dunghill, which the woman thought was good for curing the gout. James Marshall, James Robertson, and William Robertson, three skippers in Covesea, a fisher-town of Sir Robert's, were apprehended and kept in the stocks a whole night without any just cause assigned, and had not the privilege of a house, but were confined in the open air in a back-close, in a wild and stormy night; and the said James Marshall was thereafter put another time in prison, in a nasty pit far below ground, where he lay several days, and a short time thereafter died, and upon his death-bed declared the imprisonment to be the reason of his death, which happened about a fortnight thereafter; and James Marshall his son was also imprisoned without any cause, and died also some time thereafter."

The claim which Sir Robert preferred against the town council of Elgin for the losses he alleged to have sustained during the Rising of 1745-46 has been already referred to. A more important litigation was that which he instituted after the death of William, Earl of Sutherland, in 1766, with the view of establishing his claim to that peerage. It is undeni-

able that Sir Robert was heir-male of line ; but after a long and learned discussion it was finally decided that the peerage descended to females as well as to males, and that Lady Elizabeth Sutherland, the earl's infant daughter, was entitled to the dignity.

Sir Robert died in 1772 at an advanced age. He was survived for many years by his wife, a daughter of Sir William Maxwell of Calderwood. She was a very eccentric person, and during the latter years of her life lived in the little seaside village of Lossiemouth. It is said that in anticipation of an invasion by the French she had her garden wall coped with broken glass embedded in strong lime. Her faith in this impregnable rampart was fortunately never shaken.

Sir Robert's two sons, Robert and William, successively succeeded to the baronetcy. On the death of the latter in 1796 the estates passed into the family of the Cummings of Altyre, whose present representative is Sir William Gordon Gordon-Cumming, Baronet.

The name of Kinnaird is no longer to be found amongst the county families of Morayshire. The family disappears from local history in the end of the seventeenth century, under circumstances almost unexampled in the history of this or any other nation.

The Kinnairds of Culbin, in the parish of Dyke, near Forres, came originally from Perthshire. In 1400 Thomas Kinnaird of that ilk married Giles or Egidia, who was heiress of line of Richard de Moravia, the first proprietor of Culbin, and the seventh son of the famous Freskinus de Moravia, the ancestor of so many distinguished families on both sides of the Moray Firth. Giles Kinnaird's eldest son succeeded on his father's death to her Perthshire possessions. To her second son Giles left her Morayshire estates. And from

1460, when he obtained a charter of confirmation, to 1698 the lands and barony of Culbin remained the property of the Kinnairds.

It was one of the best estates in the county. The extent was about 3600 acres. There were sixteen fair-sized farms upon it, each tenant paying £200 Scots in money, with 40 bolls of wheat, bear, oats, and oatmeal, in kind; and there were numerous small crofts besides. The salmon-fishings also were extremely valuable. And such was the fertility of the deep, rich, alluvial soil, the produce of the fine silt carried down by the Findhorn in times of flood for unnumbered ages, that it was known by the name of the "Granary" or "Girnel" of Moray. No matter what other estates suffered from late frosts or protracted droughts, the crops of Culbin never failed. It is said that one year a heavy crop of barley was reaped though not a drop of rain had fallen since it was sown. The rental of the estate in 1694 was £2720 Scots, 640 bolls of wheat, 640 bolls of bear, 640 bolls of oats, and 640 bolls of oatmeal, in addition to the value of the salmon-fishings, or something not far off £6000 sterling. The mansion-house was in keeping with this handsome income. It was a large square building of dressed stones embosomed amongst rows of shady trees, with a prolific garden, a spacious lawn, and a most fruitful orchard. In right of its barony the lands of Culbin were entitled to carry a dovecot, and accordingly one stood on a little eminence hard by the house. There was a church too in the immediate vicinity, erected on what still goes by the name of the Chapelhill. Nothing that could conduce to the comfort or convenience of the lairds of "Coubine" was wanting.

The spectator, standing on the top of the Cluny Hill at Forres, sees before him, stretching along the low coast westward from the mouth of the Findhorn, a wide expanse of what

looks like undulating sandy dunes, which at once attracts his attention. On closer inspection he finds that these dunes are an accumulation of dome-shaped sandhills, most of them presenting a steep face towards the east with a counter-slope towards the west, much like the form of hill known as *rag and tail* in the Scottish Lowlands. Those close to the shore, and those farthest inland, are covered more or less completely with bent grass (*Carex arenaria*), the only green thing that flourishes in their desolate wastes. But between them is a middle ridge of hills higher than the rest, some of them reaching an elevation of 120 or 150 feet above sea-level, which has evidently been the "highway of the great sand-drift." This higher ridge of hills is in constant motion. The sand is of such extreme lightness and fineness that the merest breath of wind sets it moving. A slight breeze raises the whole surface into a whirling tempest of sand. The result is that the aspect of the scene is continually changing. A night's gale may level a sandhill 100 feet high, or convert a ravine with precipitous sides into a monotonous plain. An amusing instance of this occurred more than a century ago. A party of smugglers had landed a contraband cargo and had hidden it at the base of one of the sandhills, meaning to remove it on the morrow. When they returned at daylight this particular sandhill had disappeared: the whole face of the landscape was altered. And though since then repeated searches have been made, the smugglers' *cache* has never been found.

Under this sandy waste—which is now almost three miles in length and two in breadth, and covers 3600 acres, but which two hundred years ago was very much greater—lies buried the old barony of Culbin. The great sand-storm which hid it out of sight for ever occurred in the autumn of 1694. It was only the finishing stroke of a process which had been going

on for many years before. For some time previously the old coast-line had been gradually breaking up ; and the drift from this and from the great sandhills of Maviestoun, three or four miles farther west, had been encroaching on the lands of Culbin. But the final act in the tragedy came like a thief in the night. A sand-storm unexampled for severity came suddenly sweeping down from the west. "A man ploughing had to desert his plough in the middle of a furrow. The reapers in a field of late barley had to leave without finishing their work. In a few hours the plough and the barley were buried beneath the sand. The drift, like a mighty river, came on steadily and ruthlessly, grasping field after field and enshrouding every object in a mantle of sand. Everything which obstructed its progress speedily became the nucleus of a sand-mound. In terrible gusts the wind carried the sand amongst the dwelling-houses of the people, sparing neither the hut of the cottar nor the mansion of the laird. The splendid orchard, the beautiful lawn, all shared the same fate. In the morning after the first night of drift, the people had to break through the back of their houses to get out. They relieved the cattle and drove them to a place of safety. A lull in the storm succeeded, and they began to think they might still save their dwellings, though their lands were ruined for ever. But the storm came on with renewed violence, and they had to flee for their lives, taking with them such things as they could carry."<sup>1</sup> To add to their miseries, the sand had choked the mouth of the Findhorn, and its dammed-back waters were now flooding field and pasture. When at length they were able to return to what had once been their homesteads, not a trace of their houses was to be seen. A desert of sand had replaced a smiling

<sup>1</sup> The Culbin Sands ; the Story of a buried Estate. By George Bain, Nairn, p. 21.

landscape. The great estate of Culbin had disappeared for ever. Yet traces of it have from time to time reappeared. About a hundred years ago another furious sand-storm exposed the greater part of the mansion-house. The provident cottagers of the neighbourhood immediately seized upon it, and carried its stones to build their dwellings. Then came another storm, and again it disappeared beneath the sand. At a later period one of its chimneys was seen rising above the sand. A man more courageous than the rest mounted to the top of the sandhill and called down through the open chimney. His call was answered by a ghostly voice. The man turned and fled. Shortly after the chimney disappeared during a night of blinding drift. Since then there has been no further reappearance of the house. But traces of its once fruitful orchard have occasionally been seen. Many years after the estate had been destroyed the branches of a cherry-tree in full blossom were seen protruding from the side of one of the sandhills under which the orchard lay buried. An old man, who died about fifty years ago at the age of eighty, used to relate that in his younger days he had seen an apple-tree appearing above the waste. Once it budded and blossomed and finally bore fruit. Now the only vestiges of the estate are the sandy furrows, which on the level spaces among the sandhills still show the rigs formed by the heavy oxen-drawn plough of former days.

The almost total destruction of their lands completed the ruin of the Kinnairds, which had been for some time impending. The young laird, Alexander Kinnaird, with his wife, the widow of Hugh Rose of Kilravock, and their son, an infant of a few months old, had escaped with their lives, but their means of subsistence were gone. On the 17th July 1695 we find him petitioning Parliament for relief from cess, on the ground "that the best two parts of his estate of Culbin, by an

unavoidable fatality, was quite ruined and destroyed, occasioned by great and vast heaps of sand (which had overblown the same), so that there was not a vestige to be seen of his manor-place of Culbin, yards, orchards, and mains thereof, and which within these twenty years were as considerable as many within the county of Moray." The relief was granted him. And in further sympathy with his misfortunes Parliament passed the Act (c. 30, 1 William and Mary) still in force, prohibiting under severe penalties the pulling of bent, juniper, or broom, to which cause it assigns the sand-drift. Two years later the laird had to apply to the court for a personal protection against his creditors. And in the year following (1698) he disposed of the small portion of his estates which still remained to him to Alexander Duff of Drummuir, the grandson of Adam Duff of Clunybeg, the predecessor of the Fifes, "with my goodwill and blessing." Three months after this he was dead. His wife soon followed him to the grave. Their infant son was taken charge of by a faithful servant, who took him to Edinburgh, where she supported him and herself by needlework. The boy when he had grown to man's estate enlisted. Shortly after, he was recognised by a half-brother of his mother's, Colonel Alexander Rose, who procured him a commission. He rose to the rank of captain, and died without issue in 1743.

Of late years an attempt to reclaim parts of the Sands of Culbin, principally on the south and west sides, has been made by the adjoining proprietors, with considerable prospect of success. About 5000 acres of waste have been planted. And though it is to be hoped the "desert may yet rejoice and blossom as the rose," the immediate effect of their operations has been to transfer the land so reclaimed into an immense rabbit-warren, to the serious detriment of the young and, as yet, struggling plantations.



Of the county families of Nairnshire the most important are the lairds of Calder or Cawdor; the Roses, barons of Kilravock; and the Brodies, thanes, now lairds, of Brodie.

Before the age of the chroniclers the thanes of Cawdor were personages in the county.

At what period the old Celtic toshach, the administrator of the Crown lands, the collector of rents, the magistrate and headman of the district, received the Saxon title of thane cannot be accurately ascertained. It was, however, certainly not before the time of Malcolm Ceanmor, and probably not much later.

The first thane of Cawdor of whose existence we are assured as a historical fact is Donald, who in 1295 was one of the inquest on the extent of Kilravock and Geddes. Next comes William, who in 1310 obtained from Robert the Bruce a charter granting him the dignity in heritage on payment of twelve merks yearly, on the same conditions as it was held by his ancestors in the reign of his predecessor King Alexander III.

For nearly a century after this we know nothing of Cawdor or its thanes. But in 1405 we find a precept of sasine by Robert, Duke of Albany, in favour of Donald of Cawdor as heir of his father, Andrew of Cawdor, of the offices of sheriff of Nairn and constable of the castle. The document bears to be granted by the duke as lord of the ward of Ross, which he held as grandfather of the young Countess Eufam, who had become a nun. How or by what title the Earls of Ross claimed to hold the superiority we cannot here stop to inquire. But in 1475 the king had got his own again, and from that period the thanage appears to have been always held from the Crown direct.

But the first thane of Cawdor who is anything more to us than a mere empty name is William the sixth in succession,

who held the dignity from 1442 to 1468. He owed his success in life to the favour in which he stood with his king, James II. In early youth he had been his personal attendant—his “well-beloved squire” (*dilectus familiaris scutifer noster*). In later years he was advanced to offices of still greater importance and dignity. When, after the fall of Archibald Douglas at Arkinholme in 1455, the king came north to set matters right in the district of which Douglas had claimed to be earl in right of his wife, James took the Thane of Cawdor with him. He found that the rebellious earl, with a view to his own defence, had fortified the castle of Lochindorb, and was in the act of doing the same to the castle of Darnaway, when his death occurred. To the Thane of Cawdor the king committed the destruction of Lochindorb, a service for which he received the sum of £24. But he himself continued the repairs to the castle of Darnaway, and converted it into a hunting-seat. And when the thane had successfully accomplished his work, James, in reward of his services and fidelity, appointed him his chamberlain for “beyond the Spey.” Three years before this the king had granted the thane a licence to erect a castle of his own. Hitherto, according to Lachlan Shaw, the thanes of Cawdor, “as constables of the king’s house, resided in the castle of Nairn,” which stood beside the river on the site near the bridge now known as the Constabulary Gardens. They had, however, a seat of their own at Old Cawdor, half a mile north from their present seat. The remains of this older castle were visible in Shaw’s day, but have since entirely disappeared.

In terms of the king’s grant, the new castle was to be a house in accordance with the thane’s augmented dignity. It was to have stone walls. It was to be ornamented with little turrets. It was to have a fosse and a drawbridge, and all things necessary for its defence. It was to carry with it

all the privileges and rights to which castles of this importance were entitled "according to the custom of our reign."

The thane seems to have taken the fullest advantage of this licence. Yet the castle of Cawdor as we have it now is something very different from the keep which the king's grant authorised the thane to erect. The keep, indeed, still remains a stern and stately memorial of the fifteenth century. But the buildings which surround it are of a couple of centuries later, when the estates had passed into other hands, by whom the castle was enlarged, and indeed remodelled.<sup>1</sup>

The castle stands on the steep and rocky bank of the Cawdor<sup>2</sup> Burn, a tributary of the Nairn, and has been cut off from the level ground on the landward side by a dry ditch, some parts of which still remain. The keep, the oldest part of the structure, is 45 feet in length and 34 feet in width, and occupies the highest and most central point of the site; and its walls are sufficiently deep to admit of numerous wall-chambers, which were used as bedrooms and garde-robres. Round this are grouped, so as to form two sides of a square, the additions of more recent times. The composition is exceedingly good, and the whole appearance of the building as it now stands is picturesque in the highest degree.

Few castles in Scotland have been more embellished by tradition. The legend of its foundation reads like a story from the Sagas. The thane, it is said, unable to decide on a site for his house, determined to commit its situation to destiny. Binding the coffer containing the treasure which he had accumulated for its erection on the back of an ass,

<sup>1</sup> "The building of the work at Calder" began in 1639 and finished in 1643. In 1684, and again in 1699, it received further additions and improvements.

<sup>2</sup> The earliest form of the word is Kaledor, and it is said to be derived from *cal*, sound, and *dor*, water, and therefore means the sounding or calling water. The name is strictly appropriate to the locality.

he drove it forth to find a place for his new house. The ass set out in the direction of the Cawdor Burn till it came to a hawthorn-tree. It stopped and looked at it, then it went on. A few yards farther on it came to a second hawthorn, against which it rubbed itself and passed on again. But when it came to a third hawthorn-tree on the banks of the stream, it stopped and lay down with its burden. And round this tree the thane, recognising the finger of fate, proceeded to build his castle. The hawthorn-tree with the coffer beside it still stands in the lowest vault of the keep to mock the incredulity of modern times. Visitors, however, are no longer permitted to cut a chip from its gnarled stem, nor expected to drink to "the toast of the hawthorn-tree—prosperity to the house of Calder." The first and second hawthorn-trees, which were within 100 yards of the present site, seem to have been gifted with an almost miraculous vitality. The one lived to the commencement of the present century, the other to the year 1836.

This, however, is not the only legend connected with the castle. Another relates how the thane, like a second Samson, carried the iron gate of Lochindorb on his shoulder to Cawdor to serve as the door of his donjon in the old keep. A third, more pertinaciously asserted than either of the preceding, claims the house as the scene of Duncan's murder by Macbeth. A chamber in the castle is still pointed out as the room in which he met his death, and a series of wretched daubs on the whitewashed walls of the apartment are referred to in corroboration of the ridiculous story.

William, the next thane (1468-1503), resigned the thanage in 1492 on the occasion of his son John's marriage with Isobel, daughter of Hugh Rose of Kilravock—a union which was intended to put an end to an old feud that existed between these two neighbouring families. Unfortunately the

marriage had not the desired effect. When John Cawdor died in 1498 (for he predeceased his father) the old thane and his daughter-in-law were at daggers drawn. And the fact that he left no sons but only two infant daughters—Muriel and Janet, probably twins—did not tend to ameliorate the situation.

The surviving sons of Thane William determined to dispute the right of their nieces, and a lawsuit was commenced. Early in the proceedings Janet Cawdor seems to have died. This was immediately followed by a challenge of her sister Muriel's legitimacy. But after lasting nearly four years the dispute was terminated by a decision vindicating her birth, and thus establishing her right as heiress to the thanedom.

From her birth the child had been a prize in the matrimonial market sufficiently valuable to excite the cupidity of the foremost in the land. At her father's death Archibald, second Earl of Argyll, a powerful man in the country and at Court, had solicited and obtained from King James IV. a gift of the marriage and ward of John of Cawdor's heirs. He determined to make use of it by bestowing the poor infant and her broad acres upon his third son, Sir John Campbell.

Meantime Muriel was living at Kilravock with her mother's relations. The first step towards effecting the marriage was to get the child into Argyll's possession. Accordingly in the autumn of 1499 the earl sent Campbell of Inverliver with sixty men to bring the child to Inveraray. The Roses had no serious objections to urge against her removal, especially as they were told she would soon be amongst them again. But before she left, old "Lady Kilravock," her grandmother, took the precaution to brand the child on the hip with the key of her coffer so as to preserve incontestable proof of her identity should this be ever challenged. Inverliver accordingly departed with his charge. But when

he had got the length of Daltulich, in Strathnairn, he learned that he was being pursued by Muriel's two uncles, Alexander and Hugh, with a larger force than he had under his command. He ordered six of his men to take the child and gallop on for their lives. Then he took a sheaf of corn, dressed it in some of little Muriel's garments, and placed it under proper guardianship in his rear. That done, he faced round and waited till the Caldors came up. There was a sharp fight, in which eight of Inverliver's sons were killed. But their brave father continued the conflict till he was sure the child was out of reach of her uncles' clutches. Then he retired, leaving the fictitious child to her pursuers. "Tis said," says Lachlan Shaw, "that in the heart of the skirmish Inverliver had cried, 'S fhada glaoth o' Lochow! 'S fhada cabhair o' chlan Dhuine!' ['Tis a far cry to Lochawe! Far is help from the Clan Duine!], which has become a proverb signifying imminent danger and distant relief."

The little Muriel was safely conveyed to Inveraray, and in 1510, when she had completed her twelfth year, was married to Sir John Campbell. The year after his marriage she resigned all her possessions into the hands of the Crown. A new charter in favour of Sir John Campbell and his wife was immediately issued, uniting all the lands of Cawdor "with the castle and fortalice into one thanage and free barony." From that moment the husband of the "little red-haired lass," as an old record calls her, assumed the title of Sir John Campbell of Cawdor. And thus the Highland family which still possesses the lands supplanted the old line of the native thanes of Cawdor. In 1524 Sir John and his wife came north and settled permanently in Nairnshire.

The new thane was a man of vigour and energy, and did much to strengthen his position and to extend the influence of the family. But he was essentially a Highlander, and his

Celtic methods of compassing his ends occasionally led him into trouble with the law courts. By a transaction with the last male representative of the old Cawdors he acquired the heritable sheriffship of Nairn, and died in 1566, leaving a large family both of sons and daughters. His wife survived him for many years.

Space does not permit of our following the fortunes of the family in detail. Nor indeed is this necessary for our purpose. For the Cawdors, though important factors in local affairs, as a rule abstained from mixing themselves prominently in politics. Only once do we find them in any danger, and that was during the Rising of 1715. Unlike his neighbours, Sir Hugh Campbell, the fourteenth thane (1654-1716), espoused the Jacobite cause. But his death a few months later prevented any evil consequences accruing to the family by his action.

In 1726 John Campbell, sixteenth thane and old Sir Hugh's grandson, married Mary, daughter of Lewis Pryse of Gogirthen, in North Wales. She brought her husband "a small estate in land among the Welsh highlands." This connection had a considerable effect upon the future fortunes of the family. John Campbell took up his permanent residence in Wales, leaving his Scottish properties to be managed by a factor. But his love for his old home was never obliterated, and to his death, which occurred in 1777, he never ceased to take the warmest interest in his tenantry and estates.

As a member of Parliament John Campbell rose to considerable eminence in the political world. He was for some years a Lord of the Admiralty, and became a Lord of the Treasury in 1746. When the Act abolishing heritable jurisdiction was passed, he lost not only his sheriffship, but his office of constable of the king's castle. For this last, however, he received £2000 as compensation. Hearing from

his factor that the Act abolishing Highland dress was causing much dissatisfaction amongst his tenantry, he suggested that "they might be very agreeably accommodated by wearing wide trousers like seamen, made of canvas or the like. Nankeen might be the more genteel. But I would have the cut as short as the philabeg, and then they would be almost as good [as kilts] and yet be lawful." The laird's thoughtful suggestion does not appear to have been adopted.

Since this thane's time the Cawdor family have continued to make Wales their principal residence. In 1796 they were ennobled as Barons Cawdor of Castlemartin in Wales, and in 1827 they were advanced to an earldom in the peerage of the United Kingdom. The present holder of the title is the second Earl and twentieth Thane of Cawdor.

On the opposite bank of the Nairn, and a little more than a mile farther west from Cawdor, stands another old castle—the castle of Kilravock—very similar in character, and scarcely if anything less picturesque. Both consist of square keeps, surrounded at a later period by extensive buildings. Both are perched on banks overhanging running water. Both are now surrounded by fine old trees. The resemblance between the two is not entirely accidental. The castle of Cawdor was finished in 1454, the "house of fence" of Kilravock was begun in 1460. And both in the seventeenth century were enlarged to their present size.

The word Kilravock indicates the cell or chapel dedicated to some now forgotten saint, and tradition points out the site of the present pigeon-house as the place where it stood. But the charm that legend so liberally lends to Cawdor is wanting in Kilravock. No picturesque fables cluster round its erection. No wild or exciting stories of the past cling like lichens to its grey walls. Our interest in Kilravock, unlike our in-



terest in Cawdor, springs not from the building, but from its possessors. For the history of the Roses of Kilravock is unique in Scottish history. No other family can show a longer or a more direct descent. For six hundred years and more there has always been a baron of Kilravock, son succeeding father in the possession of the family estates without the interposition of any collateral heir, almost every one bearing the Christian name of Hugh, and none but one ever rising to higher social rank. As for the character of this remarkable family, the description given by the Rev. Hew Rose, minister of Nairn, the biographer of the house, if slightly coloured, is not far from the truth: "They were of singular ingenuitie and integritie, plain and honest in their dealings, lovers of peace, kindly and affectionate, given to hospitality, temperate and sober.<sup>1</sup> They were rather backward then precipitant in meddling and undertakings, which, if anie think, hindered the enlarging of their patrimony, yet made them take safer course for preservation of what they had. They were exposed to many troubles, through which God carried them in the way of suffering. . . . Religion, justice, truth, mercie, and the exercise of the fear of God, are surer preservers of a familie then all the other methods and measures in the world."

Living a life of quiet, unobtrusive, honourable usefulness, passing their

"silent days  
In shadie privacie, free from the noise  
And bustle of the world,"

their story scarcely falls within the scope of this book. Yet there is probably more to be learned from the lives of such men as Kilravock the Tenth (1543-1597), who lived through

<sup>1</sup> The Roses had a hereditary love of and proficiency in music. A strathspey entitled "Barain Chill-reathaig," "The Ancient Barons of Kilravock," is given in Captain Simon Fraser's 'Collection of Highland Music.'

all the troublous times of Queen Mary's checkered reign in peace and amity with men of all parties and of both religions, who could sign himself in the midst of a hot debate between himself and two turbulent neighbours, "Hucheon Rose of Kilravock, ane honest man, ill-guided betwixt them both," and even aver that such persons were the best friends he could have, "for they made him thrice a-day go to God upon his knees, when perhaps otherways he would not have gone once"; of Kilravock the Sixteenth, whose demeanour towards Prince Charles Edward and his "cousin" the Duke of Cumberland, already related, was the perfection of good breeding, and was recognised as such by both the one and the other; and of many another honest, homely, unaffected scion of the line, than from the lives of others, nobler, more notorious, more successful, but infinitely much less gentlemen, whose career it has been our duty to depict in the preceding pages.

The Roses of Kilravock are of Norman descent, and belong to a family which came over with William the Conqueror. They first settled at Geddes in 1230; in 1293 they became proprietors of the neighbouring lands of Kilravock; and in 1295 we find them in possession of the baronies of Kilravock and Geddes, the first of which they still possess.

The historical importance of the family of Brodie of Brodie rests essentially upon the part they took in vindicating the cause of the Covenant against the encroachments of Episcopacy in the seventeenth century. But for that their career would have been no different from that of many another ancient county family, and would have neither required nor deserved any special notice here.

In the year 1645 Montrose, on his way towards Moray to vindicate the royal authority, caused burn "the place of Broddie, pertening to the Laird of Broddy." In that con-

flagration all the old papers which would have enabled us to trace the career of the family from its beginning were destroyed. But if Lachlan Shaw's suggestion is to be adopted—and he gives it as nothing more than an opinion—the Brodies “were originally of the ancient Moravienses, and were one of those loyal tribes to whom King Malcolm IV. gave lands about the year 1160, when he transplanted the Moray rebels.” The family, according to the same authority, took their surname from their lands. The ancient name of their property is Brothie, softened into Brodie. “In the old Irish, *broth* signifies a ditch or mire. And the mire, trench, or ditch that runneth from the village of Dyke to the north of Brodie House seemeth to have given to this place the name of Brodie.”

That the Brodies were of native origin, and that they soon acquired a predominant position amongst the local families, is very likely. It is undoubted that there were thanes of Brodie in the thirteenth century. We hear of a Malcolm who was in existence in 1285; of a Michael who got a grant of the thanage of Brodie and Dyke from Robert I. in 1311; and so on. And as the castle which they erected has, in its older portions, all the characteristics of fifteenth-century architecture, we may rest assured of the antiquity and importance of the family.

Passing over traditions of only local consequence, the first time that the family history comes in contact with national history is in 1640, when we find the young laird of Brodie taking part along with Mr Gilbert Ross, “minister of Elgynne,” and the “young laird of Innes” in the destruction of the painted screen “dividing the kirk of Elgin fra the queir.” This act of bigoted Philistinism, which has already been recorded in its proper place, gives us the key to the character of a man who, of all his family before and since is the most notorious. Accident possibly even more than

merit led to his being mixed up in some of the most momentous political transactions of his time. But for this his record would have been no more worth the sketching than that of any other conscientious but narrow-minded religious politician of the day.

Alexander Brodie, fourteenth Laird of Brodie, was born in 1617. His father died when he was fifteen years of age, and his mother some time after married again. This may have had something to do with his early marriage, which took place when he was only eighteen years of age. It was a very happy union so long as it endured. But it lasted for only five years. His wife, who was a daughter of Sir Robert Innes of Innes, died in 1640, leaving the young widower, who never married again, with a son and a daughter. Perhaps it was his wife's early death that led him to think of more serious things. But from this time to the end of his life his thoughts were occupied with religion and religious politics. Yet beyond the escapade already referred to he took no prominent part in public matters until the year 1643, when he was chosen as member of Parliament for the county of Elgin. Then he began to interest himself in politics. He served on parliamentary committees; he became a ruling elder of the Kirk; he soon began to be looked upon as a rising man.

In 1649 Charles I. was beheaded. The Scottish Parliament at once proclaimed his son king at the Cross of Edinburgh, declaring, however, that until he gave satisfaction to the kingdom in the matter of religion, with special reference to the maintenance of the Covenants, he should not be admitted to the exercise of his royal powers. In order to obtain the necessary assurance the Estates resolved to send commissioners to the king, who was then residing with his brother-in-law, the Prince of Orange, at The Hague. Brodie was chosen as one of them. The others were the Earl

of Cassilis, George Wynrame of Liberton, and Alexander Jaffray, Provost of Aberdeen. They were accompanied by two ministers of religion, Mr James Wood of St Andrews and Mr Robert Baillie of Glasgow. The commissioners' mission was unsuccessful. The king would not accept the terms they offered. This was in March 1649. In June of the same year Wynrame and Brodie, probably in recompense of their services, were appointed Lords of Session.

In September Wynrame was again sent to Holland to urge the king to comply with the request of the Estates. The letters he sent home graphically describe the straits to which the king was reduced. He had not "bread for himself and his servants," Wynrame writes in November 1649, and "betwixt him and his brother not ane English shilling; and worse yet if I durst wryte it." France was neither able nor willing to help him. The Prince of Orange was in no better case. Charles stood out as long as he could, but in the end he had to succumb. In the beginning of 1650 he wrote to the Estates begging them to send over commissioners to treat with him. This request was acceded to; and in the spring the commissioners appointed by the General Assembly and the Estates set out on their mission. Brodie was again of their number. It was plain to the Commissioners from the first that the king's acceptance of the Covenant was the assent of the lips only. But they were as anxious to secure their king as he was to escape from his present "prisone," as Wynrame called it. And the matter was very soon settled. Charles landed in Scotland on 23d June 1650. His coronation and his renewal of the Solemn League and Covenant took place at Scone on 5th January 1651. On the 3d September he was worsted at Worcester by the forces of the Commonwealth, and once more driven into exile.

Cromwell's success at Dunbar on the same day the year

Before (3d September 1650) had placed all Scotland in his power. But months before that the disturbed state of the country had dislocated every description of business. The Court of Session sat for the last time on 28th. February. Brodie's actual experience as a judge had lasted exactly four months. He at once returned to the north and to civil life, having formed a resolution never under any circumstances to accept office under English rule. This resolution, however, he was not able to keep. According to his diary, he fought hard against the temptation for many a long year. But "after much resistance and reluctancy" he succumbed, and in January 1658 took his place amongst the English judges. The Restoration occurred in 1660. Brodie and his colleagues were superseded. In January 1661 his career as an administrator of justice was brought to a final close.

But he never actually lost the favour of the king. Charles could not perhaps forgive what must have seemed to him like time-service. But his inherent good nature would not admit of his treating him with discourtesy. Though he was never employed in public business again, he was not deprived of the privilege of kissing the king's hand whenever he went to London. Towards the end of his life we find him beginning to persuade his conscience to things which, rigid Presbyterian as he had always posed as being, he had hitherto thought sinful. Over and over again his carnal mind led him into admissions which in his heart of hearts he believed to be wrong. He was loud in his denunciations of Prelacy because the ministry of the bishops was not lively, and because he objected to churchmen holding civil place and office. But he was not opposed to a liturgy, and he had no serious objections to the office of bishop, though he was constantly lamenting that such things were calculated to be a snare to him. His whole life was a pitiful attempt

to conform to a doctrine and to principles which he could not curse with his heart, whatever he did with his lips. He was to all outside appearance a pillar of the Covenant in the North. None but himself, however, knew how unstable was its foundation. He died in 1680—a well-intentioned, but, so far as one can judge from his diary, a very miserable man.

His son James, who succeeded him, followed in his father's footsteps. He was if anything more pronounced in his adherence to the Covenant. His stubborn Nonconformity led to his being fined in the enormous sum of £24,000 Scots in 1685, as were also others of his relations. But the same temptations which beset his father afflicted him. "The world," he writes in his diary, "has been my idol, and the love of it and covetousness the root of much evil, and the Lord justlie may punish in this." Yet to these sorely tried and much-to-be-pitied men Presbyterianism owes much. In what degree the history of the district would have been modified if they had yielded to their snares we cannot tell. Still less can we estimate their actual worth to the locality. More interesting, perhaps more instructive, than any such speculations, is the study of their characters, to be found in the sincere and fervid diaries in which from day to day father and son in succession had recorded their temptations, their triumphs, their lapses, their remorse, and their hopes.

On the death of James Brodie in 1708 the estates passed into the possession of his cousin, George Brodie of Asleisk, who had married his fifth daughter. He died in 1715, and was succeeded by his son James, who enjoyed the estates for only five years. His younger brother Alexander, afterwards Lyon King-at-Arms for Scotland, followed him. On his death without offspring the estates reverted to a collateral branch—the Brodies of Spynie—whose descendants still worthily maintain the honour of the family name.

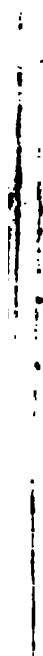


V.

THE TOWNS OF MORAY AND  
NAIRN

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## V.

# THE TOWNS OF MORAY AND NAIRN.

ELGIN: NOT THE NATURAL CAPITAL, BUT MADE SO BECAUSE OF THE CATHEDRAL—THE TOWN'S DEBT TO THE CHURCH—ITS APPEARANCE—ITS PROGRESS UNDER THE EARLDOM—THE EARL OF DUNFERMLINE, PROVOST—THE INCORPORATED TRADES—POLITICAL CORRUPTION—THE UNINCORPORATED TRADES—FINDHORN AND LOSSIEMOUTH, AND THE CONTINENTAL TRADE—EDUCATION—FORRES—NAIRN.

IF there had been no cathedral on the banks of the Lossie, Elgin would probably never have been the capital of the county. Burghead, the site selected for this purpose by the earliest inhabitants of the district, had greater historical claims and much greater natural advantages; and after Burghead came Forres. Elgin might have remained a mere provincial town, and the whole history of the district would have been different.

There is probably hardly another town in Scotland whose legendary origin is so absurdly fictitious. "A variety of etymologies," says the writer of the account of the parish in the 'New Statistical Account,' "have been given of the name; but the most probable derives it from Helgy, general of the army of Sigurd, the Norwegian Earl of Orkney, who

conquered Caithness, Sutherland, Ross, and Moray about the beginning of the tenth century." Lachlan Shaw, the county historian, though he does not accept this preposterous story, is of opinion that "it was a considerable town with a royal fort when the Danes landed in Moray about *anno* 1008." There is not the slightest evidence to justify either the one or the other of these statements. Elgin was probably founded somewhere towards the end of the eleventh century; but when, or why, or by whom, there is absolutely nothing to show.

It is certain, however, that it was one of the royal burghs in the reign of Alexander I. For in his charter conferring the Earldom of Moray on his nephew, Thomas Randolph, King Robert the Bruce reserves to his burgesses of Elgin, as well as to those of Forres and Inverness, the same liberties they had enjoyed in King Alexander's reign. In 1151, David I., who had succeeded to his brother Alexander's right in the kingdom "benorth the Forth" on his death in 1124, granted to the Priory of Urquhart an annual payment of twenty shillings, "out of the ferme of my burgh and waters of Elgin" (*de firma burgi mei et aquarum de Elgin*). And contemporaneously, or very nearly so, with this, came also the concession of a free "hanse." Under this grant the burghers acquired the right of free trade within the burgh, and the privilege of associating in defence of their prerogatives.<sup>1</sup>

Possessed of these important privileges, the burgh was

<sup>1</sup> Though not in every case the founder, David I. is entitled to be regarded as the father of all, or nearly all, the royal burghs in Scotland. The code of Burrow Lawes, bearing his name, "made at New Castill, upon the Water of Tyne," and intended to be applicable to all royal burghs within the kingdom, shows a fostering care for institutions whose future usefulness and importance few at that time were able adequately to foresee.

placed in a position to make its own way in the world. And it seems to have made good use of its advantages. For a century later, when it was proposed to change the seat of the diocese, a very large church was required for its spiritual wants. The Church of the Holy Trinity, which in 1224 became the cathedral, was probably not within the actual burghal limits. It is described as being only "*juxta Elgyn*." But we hear of no other within the town; and it is difficult to believe that more than one was required.

The transference was the making of the burgh. The burgesses soon saw that their surest and swiftest road to prosperity lay in the patronage of the Church. The Church on its part was quite ready to aid them. And thus the rise of the two—the burgh and the bishopric—went on harmoniously, rapidly, and simultaneously, till the Reformation parted them, and converted fast friends into deadly enemies.

Towns fostered into importance by the Church are commoner in England than in our own country. But whether situated north or south of the Tweed, they have all the same characteristics. The traces of ecclesiastical influence are manifest everywhere. They are to be seen in their institutions, their habits of thought, their local industries, their buildings. Handicrafts of all descriptions flourish within them, and constitute the greater part of their trade. The town becomes famous for the excellence of its masons, carpenters, glovers, weavers,<sup>1</sup> shoemakers, and the like. The Church with her riches requires and engrosses the services of every craft which can in any way minister to her material comfort. The craftsmen profit in their turn. There is ease

<sup>1</sup> "He sets wide like a Moray weaver" is an old proverbial saying applied to a man who is able to make a given quantity of material go farther than his neighbours.

and wellbeing everywhere. But as there is no necessity for extraordinary exertion, there is no real inducement to progress. There is no commerce, no manufactures, no wealth, for there is neither the need nor the energy to produce them. And when the support of the Church is withdrawn, the fortunes of the burgh are almost certain to wane.

It is only within recent years that Elgin has awakened from the sedative effects of ecclesiastical influence. Till the middle of the eighteenth century, at any rate, it was

“a monkish-looking town,  
Most reverend for to view, sirs.”

“Within the memory of some still alive,” says Professor Cosmo Innes, “it presented the appearance of a little cathedral city very unusual among the burghs of Presbyterian Scotland. There was an antique fashion of building, and withal a certain solemn drowsy air, about the town and its inhabitants, that almost prepared the stranger to meet some Church procession, or some imposing ceremonial of the picturesque old religion.” All that is changed now. Not a single one of its quaint old public buildings remains. The parish church of St Giles,—a building erected in 1224 to take the place of the Church of the Holy Trinity, converted into the cathedral,—a huge, ungainly, yet most interesting specimen of Gothic architecture, which stood in the middle of the High Street, and the Town House, with its heavy double forestairs and its rude old tolbooth tower, have been removed. “The irregular tall houses standing on massive pillars and arcades, the roofs of mellow grey stone, broken picturesquely with frequent windows, the tall crow-stepped gables, are poorly exchanged for the prim and trim square modern houses and shops.” Much, indeed, has been gained in the way of increased convenience and healthfulness. But the charm which springs

from picturesque architecture, and from associations and memories of the past, is lost for ever.

Though the rapid rise of Elgin is largely due to ecclesiastical patronage, this was not the only source of its prosperity. To its feudal superiors, who were, first, the kings, and, afterwards, the Earls of Moray, the burgh was under heavy obligations. David I. was much in the district, and most of the religious foundations in the vicinity owe their origin to his generosity. William the Lion (1165-1214), his grandson, who succeeded him, was also frequently in Elgin, and as Richard, the Bishop of Moray, had been his chaplain, the bishopric was considerably enriched on these occasions. His son, Alexander II. (1214-1249), was a still greater benefactor to the district. He visited Elgin in 1221 and in 1228. In 1231 he spent his Yule here. And in 1234 he granted to the burgh its charter of free guild, "as other burghs possessed it," and thus completed the tale of its municipal privileges. On the establishment of the earldom a new superior was interjected between the Crown and the burgh, and henceforward we find few traces of royal interference with civic affairs.

The documents still preserved in the town's "cageat" prove this at any rate, that the transference of the superiority produced no detrimental effect on the prosperity of the burgh, as was too often the case in other burghs in Scotland. If indeed there had been any conflict between the bishopric and the earldom, the result might have been otherwise. The town would certainly have suffered. Fortunately for the burgh, the bishops and the earls in Roman Catholic days were always good friends; and the rise of Elgin went on unimpeded.

This was especially the case during the earldom of the Dunbars. Many members of that distinguished family held high office in the Church—one of them, Columba Dunbar,

even attaining, as we have seen, to the bishopric. Hence we find during their tenure of the dignity numerous concessions and indulgences to the town of Elgin.

Thus in 1390, John Dunbar, Earl of Moray, "in consideration of the many hardships and devastations the Burgh had sustained since the death of his two uncles, Thomas and John Randolph, Earls of Moray," grants to the town a charter of exemption from the "excise or duty on ale brewed within it," which hitherto had been payable to the "Constable of our castle of Elgin"; and warrants the grant by allowing the burgh to retain the "ferme" due to him in case "they were anyways troubled or molested thereanent." In 1393-94, Thomas Dunbar, the second earl of the family, grants to his aldermen and bailies of the burgh and the burgesses thereof "all the wool, cloth, and other things that go by ship out of the haven of Spey uncustomed." Three years later, in 1396, he ratifies Alexander II.'s charter to the guildry, and by another deed formally takes the town under his protection, and enjoins all his judges to do the burgesses ready justice whenever they complain to them.

So in like manner, in 1451, when Archibald Douglas assumes the earldom, we find him confirming the town's charter of guildry in the same ample terms as his predecessor, Earl Thomas, had done in 1396. And other charters of various earls are extant ratifying in equally liberal phraseology the existing privileges of the town.

At various times, as we have seen, the earldom was in abeyance through the failure or forfeiture of the line which had hitherto held it. At such periods the superiority of the burgh and of the burgh lands reverted to the Crown. The necessary consequence of such interregnal periods was to compel the burgh to apply to the Crown for a renewal of its privileges. This was the case in 1594, after the murder of the Bonnie

Earl of Moray. A charter of King James VI., dated the 22d March of that year, grants to the burgesses—the provost, bailies, and community—of the burgh “all and whole the said burgh of Elgin, with all and singular the lands, tenements, yards, tofts, crofts, annual rents and dues belonging to the same, within the bounds and marches thereof.”

The terms of the charter of 1611, granting the earldom to James, son of the Bonnie Earl, seem to have necessitated a further application to the Crown to define the rights of the burgesses. Accordingly in 1633 Charles I. issued a charter to the burgh, commonly known as the town's Great Charter, in which, after regranting to the burgesses “all and hail the town of Elgin” with the lands pertaining thereto, he incorporated “the said burgh” and “the said lands” into “one free and intyre burgh royal now and in all tyme coming, to be called the burgh of Elgin, and ordained one sasine to be taken for the whole.”

This deed constituted the town's present title, and with it the modern history of the burgh may be said to commence. From this period the list of the municipal rulers is consecutive and complete. Previous to this we know scarcely anything about them.

The first provost of whom we hear is Thomas Wysman, who held the reins of civic affairs in 1261. A certain Walter, son of Ralph, is said to have been provost in 1343. Then comes a gap of nearly two hundred years. The names of only four provosts are recorded during the sixteenth century.

But about 1606 we find one of the most distinguished statesmen of the day occupying the civic chair. This was Alexander Seton, Earl of Dunfermline and Chancellor of the kingdom. The son of George, seventh Lord Seton, Mary Queen of Scots' “truest friend,” he was her majesty's “god-bairne,” and had received from her as a “god-bairne gift”



the lands of Pluscarden. At first intended for the Church, he had taken holy orders in Italy; but the outbreak of the Reformation had induced him to abandon ecclesiastical pursuits, and he joined the Scotch Bar in 1577, when he was about twenty-two years of age. In 1586 he was created an Extraordinary Lord of Session by the style of Prior of Pluscarden, in room of James Stewart, Lord Doune, the father of the Bonnie Earl of Moray. The following year the lands of Urquhart and Pluscarden were erected into a barony and granted to the prior. And on the 16th February 1588 he was appointed an Ordinary Lord of Session under the title of Lord Urquhart. Five years after this he was promoted to the President's chair of the court; he was created a peer with the style of Lord Fyvie; and finally, in 1605, was advanced to the office of Chancellor of the kingdom, and promoted to the earldom of Dunfermline. He was one of the commissioners of the Treasury, called from their number the Octavians. He was also one of the commissioners for a treaty of union with England in 1604, and the king's commissioner to Parliament in 1612. He died in 1622. During the days of his connection with Moray he resided in the bishop's town house, within the cathedral precinct, which from that circumstance is often known by the name of Dunfermline House.

There is perhaps only one other Provost of Elgin who can vie with Lord Dunfermline in distinction. This was St Giles, the patron saint of the town. The burgh records state that on the 3d October 1547 he was duly elected provost for a year; and tradition has improved the story by asserting that the council, under his chief magistracy, passed an edict to the effect that no widow should marry without the consent of the provost and magistrates!

Under Alexander II.'s charter of guildry, and its ratification by the Earls of Moray, the trades of Elgin were entitled to

form themselves into corporations. Six crafts took advantage of the privilege. These were the hammermen, the glovers,<sup>1</sup> the tailors, the cordiners (shoemakers), the weavers, and the squarewrights or carpenters. So long as Roman Catholicism endured, these guilds were in the happy position of having no history. Fostered by the Church, each craft pursued the even tenor of its way, jealously protecting its monopoly, carefully attending to its pecuniary interests, priding itself on the skill of its members, exercising a severe but wholesome discipline over its journeymen and apprentices. Each craft had its assigned position in the parish church of St Giles—its patron saint, its separate altar, its priest and confessor. Each craft was a corporation, a trade protection society and benefit society combined. It had no thoughts, no ambitions, no inclinations, beyond its own narrow limits. Absorbed with its own concerns, it had neither the time nor the desire to occupy itself with other and wider affairs.

The abolition of the old religion changed all this. The Reformation, though to all outward appearance it was only a change of creed, was actually a revolution. Old principles and prejudices, old modes of looking at things, old customs and habits, were swept away in a flood of new ideas. There was not a single nook or cranny of national thought or sentiment into which the new notions did not penetrate. Before a hundred years were over there was a new Scotland as different from the old as light is from darkness.

<sup>1</sup> In the burying-ground of Elgin Cathedral, on a tombstone dated 1687, bearing the glove and shears, the emblems of his craft, and marking the "burial-place of John Geddes, Glover Burges in Elgin, and Issobell M'Kean, his spous, and their relations," is the well-known epitaph :—

" This world is a cite full of streets,  
And death is the mercat that all men meets ;  
If lyfe were a thing that monie could buy,  
The poor could not live and the rich would not die."

*Mercat* is here used in its old legal sense of a fine or redemption-money.

The guilds of Elgin could not fail to be affected by the change. Suddenly awakened out of their old, quiet, sleepy ways, they became aware of their importance as factors in municipal life. Hitherto they had been more or less identified with the body of the burghers. Now they discovered that they and the general body of the citizens were not one but two.

This discovery was immediately followed by an effort to improve the strength of their position. The six incorporated trades resolved to form themselves into a convenery to protect their privileges. Accordingly in 1657 articles of condescendence were entered into between the town council of the burgh and the crafts, recognising their existence as independent corporations, and making regulations for the management of their respective bodies. The magistrates, however, still retained the right of nominating the deacons of each craft from a leet of three presented to them. In 1700 the trades advanced a stage further. They claimed, and in 1705 were accorded, the right to nominate their own deacons. And in 1706 the trades placed the copestone on their influence, by obtaining the right to be represented at the council board by three of their members—the deacon-convener and two others selected by the town council from the deacons of the six incorporated trades.

The result of these successive changes was to place a very considerable amount of political influence in the hands of the crafts. The election of a member of Parliament for the Elgin Burghs—which then consisted of Elgin, Cullen, Banff, Inverurie, and Kintore—rested in the respective town councils of these burghs, each of whom chose a delegate. A majority of the votes of those delegates carried the election. The admission of the trades' representatives placed

in their hands the fifth part of the representation of the burgh.

No one nowadays will dispute that the concession thus granted to the trades was a step in the right direction. It was a practical extension of the franchise to a class which had not hitherto possessed it. But under the close system which then prevailed it was not likely to be conducive of harmony. The miserable petty squabbles that ensued, the bickerings that took place between the democratic craftsmen and the more conservative town council, soon produced a state of things which threatened to become intolerable. Matters culminated in the memorable election of 1820, which resulted in the Raid of Elgin. The Fife party had the representatives of the crafts on their side; the Grants relied chiefly on their influence with the other members of the town council. But the corruption, the bribery, the treating that were practised by either side to compass its ends would scarcely now be credited. The deacons of the crafts were the special objects of attack, because, in the then state of matters in the council, their votes carried the day. James Cattanach, the deacon of the wrights, received from Lord Fife a parcel said to contain a psalm-book; but every one of its three hundred psalms consisted of a one-pound note. On the other hand, Deacon Steinson received from the Grants "a well-biggie close"—a property only disposed of a few years ago by the last heir of his name. One only of the trades' representatives to the council seems to have preserved his self-respect. It is recorded of Alexander M'Iver, the deacon of the shoemakers, that he refused £2000, and the liferent of a farm for himself and his son.

An Act of George II. attempted to deal with the evil, but with little success. It was not till the passing of the

Reform Act in 1832 that this disgraceful state of things was brought to an end. By that Act the right of election was taken away from the town council, which had hitherto so shamefully abused it, and placed directly in the hands of the people. And Peterhead was added to the list of the electing burghs. By extending the scope of the franchise, it was intended to intensify the difficulties of corruption. The Act had the desired effect. The town councils were reduced from being political factors of the highest importance to their proper sphere of administrators of municipal affairs. As for the trades' guilds, they sank at once into mere friendly societies; and as such they continue to this day. They had outlived their usefulness. The days when society had need of hammermen to forge its armour and to shoe its horses, of glovers to make its gauntlets and to provide its buff jerkins and buckskin breeches, of weavers to manufacture its linens and its homespuns, were past. The unfreemen—the merchants—had driven them off the field. Free trade was the logical concomitant of reform.

The six incorporated trades formed the aristocracy of trade within the burgh. They did not, however, exhaust the list of its industries.

In the seventeenth century the brewsters of Elgin were an important fraternity. In 1687 there were no less than eighty private brewers within the town. William Douglas, who was then the principal innkeeper, is said to have brewed within three months as much as 4000 gallons of ale and 400 gallons of aqua vitæ. As the population of the burgh was in those days only about 3000, the consumption must have been considerable. Long before this, however, the citizens had acquired a reputation for "drouthiness." In the statutes of the cathedral of 1238 there is a special prohibition to the vicars against frequenting taverns "in

a crowd, as is the custom of certain laics," under the penalty of total abstinence from all intoxicating liquor the following day. In the middle of the seventeenth century we have the first authentic notice of a very useful class of public functionaries, the tasters of ale, who probably had existed for some time previously. Their duty was to test the quality of the drink supplied to the citizens. Unfortunately the manner in which they discharged their important functions was not always satisfactory. In 1547 complaint was made to the town council "that they sae filled their bellies that they lost the very taste o' their moos, and were consequently unable to pronounce a discreet opinion thereon." To remedy this, the council increased their number to eight, in order that there might always be one at least who had the proper judgment of his senses. Much about the same time, too, the town council attempted to grapple with what was fast becoming a serious "skaith" to the community—the manufacture of ale of inferior quality by the "browster wives" of the town. It was enacted that if any of these worthies made "a washy or evil ale," she should be fined "in ane unlaw of aught shillings, and be placed upon the cock stule." Ale continued to be the beverage of the district till quite modern times, when whisky unfortunately took its place. At the present day the manufacture of whisky is by far the most important, one might almost with truth say the only, industry of the district. In the year ended 30th September 1896, there were twelve distilleries in active operation within the two counties of Moray and Nairn. Three new ones were fast approaching completion in Morayshire, while large additions were contemplated to those now at work. The quantity of proof-spirit distilled within the same period was one and three-quarter millions of gallons; and the amount of malt used was 97,000 quarters.

The quality of the spirit produced, by the Speyside distilleries in particular, is of the highest order, owing to the remarkable perfection to which the process of distillation has been carried, the special suitability of the waters of the Morayshire burns and rivers, the use of peat in the malt-kilns, the quality of the barley used for malting, and above all to the fact that malt, and malt alone, and neither sugar nor unmalted grain, nor any other substitute, is used in its manufacture. As yet there seems no prospect of diminution in the Morayshire whisky trade. Every year, indeed, sees an increase over the one preceding.

The withdrawal of ecclesiastical influence from the burgh was not immediately followed by a decline of its fortunes. On the contrary, Elgin seemed to awaken to a new life. There can be no doubt that an amount of energy pervaded all classes, which, had it lasted, might have placed the little town on a much higher level amongst the burghs of Scotland than it now possesses. We have already shown how the local trades, released from the fetters of ecclesiasticism, attempted to assert themselves, and how ignominiously they fell. The same result attended the foreign trade of the district.

The trade with the Continent, especially with Holland, which the necessities of the Churchmen had fostered, and probably engendered, assumed what may be considered a surprising importance in the seventeenth century. Findhorn, a little village a few miles north of Forres, at the mouth of the river of the same name, was the principal seat of the trade. It was built on a sandpit forming the eastern horn of a sheltered and most picturesque bay, and has more than once experienced the Biblical fate of the house built on sand. The trade itself was in the hands of a class who, as a rule, have not shown much inclination to business.

It was ostensibly carried on by men like William Duff of Dipple ; his uncle, William Duff, Provost of Inverness ; and William King of Newmill, Provost of Elgin. But nearly all the landed gentry in Moray and Nairn—such as the lairds of Innes, Kinsteary, Muirtown, Clava, and Kilravock ; Brodie of Brodie, Lyon King-at-Arms ; Sir Robert Gordon of Gordonstoun, premier baronet of Scotland ; and Dunbar of Thunderton, heritable sheriff of the county—were directly or indirectly engaged in it, a condition of things almost without a parallel in any other county in Scotland. The produce which these well-born traders exported was the salmon, herring, and cod-fish which they caught in the waters attached to their estates, and occasionally the spermaceti and blubber of whales stranded on their lands. In return, they imported Holland muslins, lawns, ribbons, and silks, foreign wines, spices, cucumbers, and capers — materials for the adornment of their wives and daughters, and for their own material enjoyment. And what they did not require themselves they were always ready to sell to their neighbours at a good profit. When the enterprise was at the height of its prosperity the greater part of the trade of the north of Scotland was in their hands.

Towards the end of the seventeenth century the magistrates of Elgin made an attempt to get possession of this trade by diverting it from Findhorn to Lossiemouth, a village which was then, as now, their property. In 1687 they procured a Crown right to erect a harbour there. In 1703 they began to build it, and in due time it was erected. But by this time the trade had begun to dwindle. Soon it disappeared altogether. Findhorn became the ghost of its former self. Of Lossiemouth it could be said that it existed only. Now, by a fortunate conjunction of circumstances,—the establishment of a golf-course, its unrivalled air, its excellent sands for



bathing, its erection into a burgh, the deepening and improvement of its harbour,—Lossiemouth bids fair to become an important watering-place, and the prosperity which has been so long delayed is likely to come to it at last.

Perhaps the most valuable legacy which the Church bequeathed to Elgin was its zeal in the cause of education. In the time of Bishop Bricius (1203-1222) we first hear of a school in connection with, and within the precincts of, the cathedral. It was called the Sang Schule, and was instituted for the education of youths intended for the service of the Church. In it they were instructed in the Church services, and received the elements of what would now be termed a liberal education. But when Roman Catholicism was abolished, the sang schule did not become, as so many schools of similar name and origin did become, the grammar-school of the burgh—for this reason, that in 1488 the cathedral authorities had established a grammar-school for the burgh, and within its boundaries. It was, of course, controlled by the Roman Catholic Church till the Reformation. But as it was specially designed for the education of the children of the burghers, the scheme and scope of its teaching were quite different from those of the cathedral institution.

The sang schule disappeared either with or before the Reformation. The grammar-school continued to be the only available establishment for the education of the youth of the district until the year 1620, when King James VI. granted a charter to the magistrates and town council of the burgh, establishing a school for teaching music and other liberal arts in connection with the grammar-school, and “mortifying” the property of the old hospital and preceptory of the Maisondieu to the town for its support and maintenance. In 1659 this supplementary school was converted into an English school, in which sacred music was also taught. And so things

continued till the year 1800, when the two schools were amalgamated into the Elgin Academy, and new and commodious buildings erected for its use. These gave place in the year 1887 to the present handsome building. Now there are six schools in Elgin and its suburbs; and in all of them the old reputation of the burgh as a scholastic centre is worthily maintained. There are few county towns in Scotland where better education is to be had. In all, except the Academy, instruction is now *gratis*.

The antiquity of Forres is probably greater than that of Elgin. At any rate, long before the time of Alexander I. we hear of such a place existing. It was in the town of Forres, according to Fordun, that King Donald, son of Constantine (892-903), died, not without suspicion of poisoning. It was in the same town, according to the same authority, that King Duff (961-965) was murdered, and his body hid "under the shadow of a certain bridge near Kinloss." As for Macbeth's connection with the district, on which its modern fame so largely depends, it is hardly necessary to remark that it rests only on the unreliable basis of tradition and the equally doubtful evidence of Hector Boece, "the learned Mr Raphael Hollinshead," and Shakespeare.

Its existence as a royal burgh, however, cannot be carried back to an earlier period than the reign of Alexander I. (1107-1124). It is therefore contemporaneous with Elgin, Nairn, Inverness, and the other northern burghs. Like them, too, it has lost its original charter. The title under which it now exercises its municipal privileges is a charter of *novodamus* by King James III., dated in 1496. Proceeding upon the narrative that its older charters had been "destroyed, burnt by fire, annulled through the devastations of war, and other accidents," it of new erects it into a royal burgh, "with all the

rights and privileges it had hitherto enjoyed.' This charter was subsequently ratified by King Charles I. in 1641.

Like these other royal burghs, Forres had also its royal castle. There is authentic evidence of its existence in the time of William the Lion (1165-1214). It stood on a slight eminence on the west side of the town, girt about by the little gently-flowing Mosset burn. But the ruins which now surmount that eminence are not those of the ancient castle, but of a modern structure ; and no trace of the old "fort," as Lachlan Shaw calls it, exists.

Much about the same time, too, we first hear of a church at Forres. In later times this church formed part, possibly the most important part, of the prebend of the archdeacon of the diocese. And, along with the other principal churches in the diocese, it was placed by Pope Innocent II. under the spiritual protection of St Peter, and of himself as Vicar of God on earth. Yet, notwithstanding all these marks of distinction, Forres neither has, nor has ever had, any history. There are, indeed, a few noteworthy incidents connected with it, some of which have been already related. But they had never any real, vivifying influence on the affairs of the district ; and their chief importance lies either in their own picturesqueness, or in the indirect light they throw upon the inclination of local sentiment and opinion.

The word Forres is said to be derived from two Gaelic vocables—*far uis*, near water ; and the name is singularly appropriate to its position. The little village of Findhorn was the port of Forres, as Leith is the port of Edinburgh. The importance of both the one and the other is now unfortunately a thing of the past. Forres is still, however, one of the brightest and pleasantest places within the county. And with its picturesque surroundings, its unrivalled climate, and its other natural advantages, there is nothing to prevent

its ultimately attaining to that position amongst the burghs of Scotland for which its original founders, whoever they may have been, destined it.

The old name of Nairn was Invernarne—the mouth of the river Nairn, the water of alders. The alder-tree still forms the appropriate badge of the stream. Till comparatively recent times there was a dense thicket of these bushes extending for several miles up the river; and it is said that wherever its banks remain undisturbed this homely and characteristic tree immediately makes its reappearance.

The early history of Nairn is precisely similar to that of the other royal burghs in the north. It owes its foundation as a royal burgh to Alexander I., whose services to Scottish civilisation in this respect have hardly yet been adequately appreciated. But, like its neighbours of Forres and Elgin, it lost its charter of erection, if any such ever existed, “through turbulencies, occasion of war, and divers depredations and incursions of Irish [Celtic] rebels, and through the negligence of the custodiers of the same”; and it now holds its extensive burghal privileges, with its right of free port and harbour, under a charter of ratification and confirmation granted by King James VI., dated the 16th October 1589. Like them, too, it early placed itself under the tutelage of a patron saint. What St Giles was to Elgin, and St Lawrence to Forres, St Ninian was to Nairn—a powerful protection in more believing days than ours, and a guarantee of antiquity and respectability in our own. But Nairn differs from most other Scottish burghs of so remote an origin. Not a single trace of antiquity is to be found within it. Any one visiting it for the first time would undoubtedly set it down as one of the most modern towns in Scotland. Its trig villas, its High Street with its handsome banks and its shops with plate-glass windows, its wide beach

with rows of bathing-machines, its crowded golf-links, its general air of energy and progress, have dissociated it entirely from the past. From a historical point of view this is perhaps to be regretted. Yet it is impossible to refuse to the citizens the credit due to their worldly wisdom, or to withhold the praise to which they are entitled for transforming a sleepy old-world town into a thriving, fashionable watering-place.

Yet the old history of the town was very interesting. Standing on the dividing line between the Highlands and the Lowlands, it could not fail to be affected by both Celtic and Saxon influence. There is an old story, probably apocryphal, that James VI., in conversation with the envoys of some other nation, referred to it as a town so long that the inhabitants of the one end of its then single street did not understand the language of those at the other. There was doubtless some basis of truth in the remark, if it was ever made. For the Celts had as little sympathy with the Saxons as the Jews had with the Samaritans ; and both races no doubt preferred to live only with and by themselves. To-day, though no such line of delimitation exists between these two races, Nairn still consists of two separate and distinct communities. The fishing population, which in its names, and in a lesser degree in its customs, yet shows traces of its Scandinavian origin, has its habitat at the mouth of the river close to the sea. The rest of the citizens, Lowlanders and Highlanders combined, cluster round the more southerly extremity of the burgh. Less marked, indeed, in its outward features, and therefore not so readily recognisable, it is nevertheless a parallel case to Edinburgh and Newhaven. The peculiar and interesting traits of the fishing community of Nairn would well repay a patient and sympathetic study.

VI.

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

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### THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE.

POPULATION OF MORAY AND OF NAIRN—CENSUS OF OCCUPATION—CLIMATE, SOIL, AND PHYSIOGRAPHICAL POSITION—THE MORAY FLOODS—GEOLOGY—PROGRESS OF AGRICULTURE—TIMBER—THE MORAYSHIRE FARMERS' CLUB AND ITS GOOD OFFICES FOR AGRICULTURE—THE HOUSING OF THE RURAL POPULATION—RURAL "PLOYS": THE PENNY WEDDING—LYKE-WAKES—"RANTS" AND "TWEETLES"—SHINTY AND "THE BOOLS"—FOOD AND DRINK—THE CARE OF THE POOR—FASTERN'S EVE—BELTANE—MICHAELMAS—HALLOWE'EN—HOGMANAY—SUPERSTITIONS—THE FISHER-FOLK—MODERN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COUNTIES.

At the census of 1891 the population of Elginshire was 43,453, and that of Nairnshire 10,019. This was a decrease on the previous decennial period of 335 in Elginshire and of 436 in Nairnshire:

The population in both counties is of a mixed origin. Some descendants of the early Celtic inhabitants of the district are possibly yet to be found. The name Macbeth is not an uncommon one in the neighbourhood of Forres; and along the seaboard to this day there is a strong survival of pure Scandinavian blood. But in Moray and Nairn alike the bulk of the present population is of foreign origin—the descendants of settlers who, from the time of the twelfth century downwards, have been intruded upon, and in the end have almost entirely obliterated, the original inhabitants.

Most of these settlers came originally from the Lowlands of Scotland, and were of Saxon origin. But the physical con-



figuration of the country was such, that it had attractions for both Lowlanders and Highlanders.

In both counties an extensive range of low hills, stretching along the seaboard from east to west, divides the plain country from the hills. This range has been from earliest times, and in some degree still continues to be, the bisecting line between the two races. But in the mountainous part of Elginshire the Celtic settlers were always few in comparison with those who established themselves in the similar district of Nairnshire. The result is, that in 1891 there were in the former county only twelve persons who spoke nothing but Gaelic, and 2263 who spoke both Gaelic and English. In Nairnshire the number was proportionately greater. The exclusively Gaelic speakers numbered 53, the Gaelic and English speakers 2487—a very great difference, looking to the extent of the population of each county.

The Boundary Commissioners appointed under the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889, made certain alterations on those parts of Moray and Nairn that were partly within adjoining counties, with a view to straighten their marches. Giving effect to these, the present areas of the two counties, including foreshore and water, are :—

	Acres.
Elginshire . . . . .	313,077
Nairnshire . . . . .	105,949

The census of occupations of 1891 showed the following results :—

In Elginshire there were—

	Males.	Females.
Engaged in agricultural pursuits .	5,539	457
Engaged in industrial pursuits .	4,558	1,242
Professional persons . . . .	820	569
Domestic servants . . . . .	79	3,417
Engaged in commercial pursuits .	1,064	26
No occupation and non-productive	8,308	17,392
Total . . . . .	<u>20,368</u>	<u>23,103</u>

In Nairnshire there were—

	Males.	Females.
Engaged in agricultural pursuits .	1,443	159
Engaged in industrial pursuits .	858	269
Professional persons . . .	169	138
Domestic servants . . .	11	602
Engaged in commercial pursuits .	181	4
No occupation and non-productive	1,622	3,699
Total . . .	<u>4,284</u>	<u>4,871</u> <sup>1</sup>

The number of males engaged in agricultural pursuits in both counties is thus far in excess of those employed in other avocations. In other words, farming is the principal industry in both.

And thus it has always been. Relatively small though these counties are—the one ranks in extent as the eighteenth, and the other as the twenty-ninth, county in Scotland—they have from the first, but especially of recent years, occupied a front place in the agriculture of Scotland. This position they owe to their exceptional advantages in the way of climate, soil, and geographical position. And to these sources are of course to be attributed in great degree the peculiar characteristics of the people.

The general aspect of the two counties is, first a sea-board plain, diminishing in depth from east to west, from the mouth of the Spey to the mouth of the Nairn; then a range of low hills, whose highest peak is only 1797 feet high, dividing the lowlands from the wilder region behind; and lastly, a tract of more or less highland country, full of glens and straths running from south to north, through which the four rivers of Moray and Nairn—the Spey, the Lossie, the

<sup>1</sup> The difference between these totals and the totals of population already given arises from the fact that between the date of publication of the first and second volumes of the Census Report the Boundary Commissioners had made the alterations mentioned above.

Findhorn, and the Nairn — find their way into the Moray Firth.<sup>1</sup>

From an agricultural point of view this seaboard plain is worth all the rest of the two counties put together. That portion of it which lies within the county of Moray is known by the local name of the "Laigh of Moray." The part of it which lies within Nairnshire has no distinctive appellation. It is a tract of rich alluvial country formed of the detritus of the four rivers above mentioned. Here are to be found the kindest soils, the most genial climate, the most prosperous farms, and the heaviest crops within the district. The agriculture of this region has a competitor only in the fertile fields of East Lothian.

The Laigh of Moray is about thirty miles in length, and from five to twelve miles in breadth. Slightly undulating towards the east, it is almost a dead level between Alves and Kinloss, its most fertile portion. It is not by any means a picturesque piece of scenery. Yet it is not without an attractiveness of its own. The beauty of a district depends greatly upon its adaptation to the purpose which it is intended to subserve. The well-to-do farms, the rich fields, the general air of ease and wellbeing that prevails, constitute a landscape which, though neither grand nor impressive, is undoubtedly pleasing.

On the southern side of the range of hills already referred to—a range which has no distinctive appellation, but

<sup>1</sup> There are two well-known, repeatedly quoted, and for their time remarkably accurate, descriptions of the county of Moray. The one is by John Leslie, Bishop of Ross (b. 1526, d. 1596), in his '*De origine, moribus, et rebus gestis Scotorum libri decem*'; the other is by Sir Robert Gordon of Straloch (b. 1580, d. 1661), who furnished the geographers Blaeu of Amsterdam with much of the information contained in their celebrated Atlas.

is known by the names of the various districts it passes through—lies the great strath or valley of the Spey. Off this diverge various smaller straths, full of natural beauty, and some of them almost as fertile as the Laigh. There are no deer-forests in the county, though roe-deer are to be found in many of the woods; but the moors carry heavy stocks of grouse and hares, and in the lower ground snipes, pheasants, and partridges, and the farmer's curse, the too abundant rabbit, abound.

The inhabitants of these smaller dales are, to the student of social life and manners, by far the most interesting in the county. Old customs, old-world ways of looking at things, still prevail amongst them. Something of the prejudices—one should perhaps rather say of the conservatism—which, till the commencement of the present century, obtained all over the country in things agricultural, is still to be found among these farmers and crofters. Yet, looking to their less genial climate, and in some parts less kindly soil, the rate of progress is possibly as well maintained as in the more favoured Laigh.

The climate of both counties has always been one of their strong points. It is an old saying that Moray has forty days more summer than any other part in Scotland. If sunshine is the test of summer, this is possibly true. But alike in Moray and Nairn the climate is exceedingly variable, the pendulum swinging from extreme cold in winter to extreme and even distressing heat in summer. In Elgin, owing to the fact that the town is built in a basin surrounded by hills, the summer climate is very relaxing. But the average temperature throughout the year is about  $48^{\circ}$ , and the average rainfall from 25 to 28 inches.

The prevailing winds are from the west and north-west,

and from these quarters comes also the heaviest rainfall. The climate in the hill regions is both colder and more variable than in the lowlands. The rainfall is also greater. The moisture-charged clouds from the north and west sweep over the plain, but are arrested and broken by the hills in the southern and south-western districts of the two counties. Hence it follows that in the Laigh the farmers have often more sunshine than they desire, especially in the months of June, July, and August. The old local distich—

“A misty May and a drappy June  
Sets Moray up and Spey down,”

is of universal application. The greatest misfortune that can befall this region is drought, and unfortunately it is of too common occurrence. This, however, is counteracted in great measure by the depth, the richness, and the recuperative power of a large proportion of the soil.

A striking instance of this occurred on the now buried estate of Culbin near Forres. On one occasion, it is said, no rain fell for nine months, yet the harvest of that year was as prolific as any of its predecessors. In the famine which prevailed over the whole kingdom towards the end of the sixteenth century, owing to excessively cold and extremely rainy seasons, the Laigh continued so productive as to be able to spare a large quantity of corn to alleviate the sufferings of other districts. It is said that people came from Forfarshire to buy meal at the enormous rate of £1, 10s. for the boll of 150 lb. weight, though this implied a carriage of over a hundred miles across the Grampians.

If drought is the chief bane of the lowlands, floods are infinitely more so in the uplands, and in the districts irrigated by the four great rivers. The “Moray Floods,” as they are

called, though they prevailed over the whole north-east of Scotland as far south as the river Esk in Forfarshire, of the 3d and 4th August 1829, have acquired something more than a local reputation, not only from their destructive effects, but from the fact that their story has been embalmed for all future ages by the graphic pen of Sir Thomas Dick Lauder.

They owed their origin to the cause already indicated—the breaking of a great mass of moisture-laden cloud against the mountain barrier in the southern district of the counties, in which are situated the springs of all the local rivers. Hence the area of inundation was chiefly in the lands adjoining the Nairn, the Findhorn,<sup>1</sup> the Lossie, and the Spey. But it spread more or less beyond these boundaries, and did damage from which the district did not recover for many a year to come.

These extensive floods were preceded by a lengthened period of extreme drought and of unusual heat, extending over the greater part of the months of May, June, and July. In the earlier part of the season the drought was so great that many of the recently planted shrubs and trees perished. In the latter part, the most eloquent indication of approaching misfortune was the extreme variability of the barometer. Waterspouts both on sea and land were also not uncommon; at one place two suns were seen. These unusual occurrences excited wonder rather than apprehension. Few saw in them the forerunners of a calamity which was to be as disastrous as it was unprecedented.

The rain commenced in the upper country on Sunday evening the 2d August, and continued with only a partial subsidence till Tuesday the 4th. The “serious rain,” how-

<sup>1</sup> In the plain of Forres it covered a space of more than twenty square miles.

ever, as one of the witnesses called it, did not commence till the morning of the 3d, when it began to fall, accompanied by a violent north-east wind, with such force and rapidity that to many it seemed as if the windows of heaven were opened and the days of the Deluge were about to find their modern counterpart. Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, himself an eyewitness, thus graphically describes the scene: "The noise was a distinct combination of two kinds of sound—one a uniformly continued roar, the other like rapidly repeated discharges of many cannons at once. The first of these proceeded from the violence of the waters; the other, which was heard through it, and as it were muffled by it, came from the enormous stones which the stream was hurling over its uneven bed of rock. Above all this was heard the fiend-like shriek of the wind, yelling as if the demon of desolation had been riding upon its blast. The leaves of the trees were stripped off and whirled in the air, and their thick boughs were bending and cracking beneath the tempest, and groaning like terrified creatures impatient to escape from the coils of the watery serpent. There was something heart-sickening in the aspect of the atmosphere. The rain was descending in sheets, not in drops, and there was a peculiar and indescribable lurid or rather bronze-like hue, that pervaded the whole face of nature as if poison had been abroad in the air."

The rainfall between five o'clock on the morning of the 3d and five o'clock on that of the 4th August is estimated at  $3\frac{3}{4}$  inches. Taking the average of the years from 1826 to 1878, one-sixth of the annual allowance of rain fell within these twenty-four hours. The rivers rose to a height unprecedented. The flood-line on the Findhorn was at one spot no less than 50 feet above the ordinary level. Its tributary, the

Divie, rose to 40 feet, and foamed past beneath the bridge, a column of water of nearly 976 square feet, with a velocity apparently equal to that of a swift horse. The Nairn was also very much swollen. The Lossie overflowed its banks to such an extent as to inundate all the low ground around Elgin. The Spey, on the other hand—within Morayshire at least—was scarcely affected at all. But in the more mountainous districts which it traverses it attained an unexampled force and altitude. In every case the increased volume of these rivers was in exact ratio to their more or less close connection with the hill district behind.

Within a few hours, bridges like that across the Spey at Fochabers, which had been erected only about twenty-five years before at a cost of £14,000, buildings and houses whose stability seemed assured by their venerable antiquity, disappeared as though they had been built of cards; the natural landmarks of the locality were obliterated; the face of the country was changed. Every dry scar on the mountain-side had become a torrent. The farmer saw his land "sailing off to ocean by acres at a time"; the landowner saw his ancestral woods swept away before his eyes; the poor crofter watched his humble homestead as it floated out to sea, carrying with it the carefully gathered "plenishing" of many a laborious year. The loss and suffering were universal and immense. The incidents recorded of this disastrous inundation are beyond the wildest conceptions of fiction. At Dunphail the total destruction of the mansion-house was only averted by the bank on which it was built falling in within one yard of the foundation of its east tower. In the neighbourhood of Forres a man stood for a whole day on the roof of his house before he could be rescued. A woman attempting to wade across a submerged bridge was swept off her feet,



and was floating down the river, "supported by the buoyancy of her outspread drapery," when she was fortunately caught and rescued. At Broom of Moy a cottage was seen standing in the midst of the waters with its western side nearly gone. A boat put off to inspect it. On arriving at the cottage all was silent, and it was supposed that all had been drowned; but on looking through a hole in the partition, the inmates—consisting of an invalid old man, his wife, nearly as infirm, and a boy—were discovered roosting like fowls on the beams of the roof. At another cottage a young woman was found sitting up to her neck in water, with the dead body of her old aunt in her arms. A man who had been saving the furniture of a poor neighbour fell over a bridge and was carried down by the stream, and then cast on the bank by the mere force of the torrent.

"What did you think of when you were in the water?" demanded a bystander.

"Think of?" replied the other. "I was thinking how I could get out, and how I could catch my bonnet."

A shepherd in Glen Feshie was asleep in his cottage, with his children beside him, when he was awakened by the tremendous noise of the waters. Springing from his bed, he found himself standing in two feet of water. Quick as thought he lifted his children, one after the other, from their beds, and carried them, half-asleep and all unconscious of their danger, to the top of an adjoining hill. When the morning broke the river was dashing all round them, and cataracts falling from the rocks on every side. Shivering, starving, and naked, exposed to all the buffets of the tempest, they were kept prisoners on "their cliff of penance" till the evening of the following day. At the little loch of Loch-na-mhoon, near Aviemore, a small island, composed chiefly of the matted roots of aquatic plants, was torn from its moorings, driven

across the lake, and stranded on the steep bank of its southern shore. The tenant's wife at Dalraddy, near Loch Alvie, on opening the door on the Tuesday morning after the flood had subsided, found lying in a heap at the back of her house a handsome dish of trout, a pike, a hare, a partridge, a dish of potatoes, and a dish of turnips, all brought down by the stream, and one of her own turkeys; and in one of the houses in the village of Rothes a salmon of 6 lb. weight was caught.<sup>1</sup> A widow on Speyside saved her life and that of her children by making a raft "of the bit palings and bits of moss-fir" that were lying about, and floating out to sea, as she said, "on a brander."

Proper data are unfortunately wanting as to the damage done by the flood; but it must have been enormous. The Duke of Gordon's loss was estimated at £16,494; Lord Cawdor's at £8230; that of Mr Cumming Bruce of Dunphail at £5000; and other landowners suffered proportionately. But it was on the poorer classes that the blow fell heaviest. Most of them lost all they had—their houses, their stock, their land, their meal-kists, their little store of "picture-books," as one of them called his bank-notes. What the flood of the 3d and 4th of August had spared, a supplementary flood on the 27th of the same month appropriated. Though 671 families, or about 3019 individuals, were relieved in Morayshire alone by what was called the Flood Fund—a public subscription which was immediately started, and which realised £1470—the unrelieved suffering must have been great. And who can estimate the grief and misery occasioned by the loss of those who were nearer and dearer to the survivors than all their earthly possessions put together?

The geology of the district is in conformity with its physical

<sup>1</sup> "Floods in Morayshire in August 1829." 'Elgin Literary Magazine,' June 1830, p. 414.

character. Speaking generally, the level seaboard plain is composed of sandstone heavily coated in places by diluvium; the uplands consist of hill-masses of granite and gneiss. It was long supposed that the Laigh of Moray belonged exclusively to the Old Red formation; but the discovery of fossiliferous remains usually associated with the Triassic system has led geologists to doubt this. These fossiliferous remains are of a high order and of peculiar interest. While those first discovered were allied to the Crocodilia, those of more recent detection are Dicynodonts, and have been found nowhere else in Europe. One at least is new to science—the extraordinary creature which has been named *Elgina mirabilis*. The result is that the age and character of the Elgin sandstones are still unascertained.

The principal elevations of this sandstone tract are given by Mr Patrick Duff<sup>1</sup> as follows: Covesea Hill, 288 feet; Quarrywood Hill, 280 feet; Pluscarden Hill, 776 feet; and Dallas Hill, 850 feet. For building purposes they are unrivalled. Their texture is fine; their durability, owing to the large admixture of silica, is above the average; while in tint they vary from a warm pink to a delicate cream. Each quarry—and the whole of the Laigh is full of quarries—has its own distinctive shade and its own distinctive character. There are few places in Scotland which can compete with Morayshire, and especially with the district around Elgin, in the abundance, the beauty, and the quality of its building material.

Scattered about amongst the Elgin sandstones are patches of oolite, but whether *in situ* or not is still a debatable question. There is also a band of what has been called, for want of a better name, cornstone, running right across the county. Though not a true limestone, it has been burned in various parts of the district as lime.

<sup>1</sup> Sketch of the Geology of Moray, p. 2.

Amongst the most picturesque features of the district are the red banks of the river Spey between Orton and Fochabers. They consist of more or less vertical cliffs, containing a large proportion of ferruginous matter, and give added interest to an already interesting landscape.

The extensive sandy deposits along the seaboard of the two counties have been already referred to, when telling the story of the Culbin Sands.

There are practically no minerals either in Moray or in Nairn. Galena was discovered at Lossiemouth about thirty years ago, and works erected at considerable expense; but the enterprise did not pay, and had to be discontinued.

Owing to the peculiarities of its geological structure, there is a great variety of soil in Morayshire. Sand, clay, loam, and peat, each of them extending over a considerable area, are to be found within it. The parishes of Speymouth, Urquhart, St Andrews Lhanbryde, Drainie, the eastern part of Spynie, the greater part of Elgin, and the lower lands of Birnie and Dallas, belong largely to the first of these. The greatest extent of clay soil is found in Duffus, part of Spynie, and Alves. Loam is the most extensively diffused of all. In the parishes of Duffus, Alves, Spynie, Kinloss, Forres, Dyke, the lowlands of Rafford and Edinkillie, it constitutes the predominant factor. Nairnshire is almost entirely composed of it, and the hilly district of Knockando largely consists of clay-loam.

In comparison with the other classes of soil, the extent of peat is inconsiderable, and it varies greatly in quality, from pure peat to a friable moss. In the lowlands this mossy soil, which is chiefly found in the lowest grounds, is a mere surface formation resting on an under soil generally composed of sand. It is the pest and the worry of the agriculturist. It exudes in hot weather a sulphurous and offensive smell, which

poisons the grain, tarnishes silver with a leaden hue, and in a short time corrodes the kitchen utensils, whether of copper or of iron.

The peat districts of the county were at one time much more extensive than they are now. A wide belt of peat and submerged forest stretched in Scandinavian times to the westward of the promontory on which the burgh of Burghead now stands. From this is derived the name of Torfness by which it is known in the Sagas.

Leslie, whose admirable 'Survey of Moray and Nairn' is to this day an authority, assuming the acreage of Moray to be 407,200 acres—an estimate far above its actual area—thus distributes the various classes of soil amongst the agricultural land :—

	Acres.
Sandy soil . . . . .	39,500
Clayey soil . . . . .	18,500
Loam . . . . .	45,820
Peat and moss . . . . .	1,700
Uncultivated soil, lakes, marshes, water-courses, and roads . . . . .	301,680
	<hr/> 407,200 <hr/>

This estimate was made in 1813. But much of the land here set down as waste has since been reclaimed. Indeed it is the general opinion of farmers that most of the reclaimable land, or land that will repay the cost of reclamation, within the two counties, has been brought under cultivation. Much of this land, too, has been utilised for pasture. But as a comparative estimate of the prevalence of each of the different kinds of soil within the county, it is not very far from the mark even at the present day.

The "Moray pan," or the "Moray coast pan," is a name given to a peculiarly aggravating species of subsoil which prevails in certain districts of the lowlands. Towards the

sea this pan is of a hard gravelly nature, easily broken. In the more inland districts, however, it is composed of gravel and clay so tightly cemented together that a considerable effort is required to penetrate it. As a rule, however, the subsoil of the Laigh is of a light, kindly, gravelly nature, and to this natural system of drainage the district owes much of its extraordinary fertility.

The enormous advance which has been made in the cultivation of the soil within the two counties, especially in Moray—an advance which is almost a revolution—is the growth of the last sixty or seventy years only. Up to that time the farmers of Moray and Nairn had made no further progress in agricultural knowledge than they had at the time of the Reformation. Within the memory of men still living the old tenures, the old modes of cropping, the old primitive implements, the old customs, the old comfortless style of living, which were common over all the north of Scotland, were to be found in both. Oats and barley were the staple crops. The breeding of cattle of a very indifferent description, and worth only from £3 to £5 a-head, was thought to pay better than cereals. Wool and mutton were of little importance. It was only in the upland districts that sheep-breeding was cultivated. The sheep were always of the blackfaced breed, and never fetched more than 12s. or 14s. apiece. Up till 1782, at least, fencing was never dreamed of. The whole area of both counties lay open to the trespasses of all the stock within them. Anything approaching to scientific manuring was absolutely unknown. The rate of wages for men-servants was from £9 to £10 per annum, and for women from £4 to £5, exclusive of board. The farms, even the best of them, were irregularly laid off and cropped. Northern farming, in short, was a precarious struggle with the soil and the elements, in which it was possible, but nothing more, for

industry and frugality to hold their own. All this is changed now. There has been no radical alteration in the system of farming pursued. The change has been in the adoption of better and more enlightened modes of cultivation. Farms have doubled their size and their value, as well by increasing their arable land, and by rendering it more prolific, as by adding to their pasturage. In 1813, when Leslie wrote his 'Survey,' there were few that stretched to 300 acres arable: a certain proportion extended to between 140 and this number, but the great majority were from 60 to 120. Now there are several where the arable land is from 400 to 500 acres, and the average may be stated as something about 200.

In 1857 the arable area of Moray was 30,311. In 1870 it was 100,450 acres in Moray and 24,443 in Nairn. In 1881 it was 105,226 acres in the one and 26,359 in the other. Between these eleven years, therefore, the increase was about 434 acres per annum in Morayshire and 174 acres in Nairnshire.

The introduction of shorthorns soon after the year 1830; the adoption of artificial manures; the wonderful advance that has been made, especially since 1857, in the way of squaring up farms, forming drains, fencing, renovating farmsteadings, and building farmers' dwelling-houses and servants' cottages, have put an entirely new aspect on things, have increased the valuation of the counties and the rates of servants' wages, and brought their agriculture into a condition which compares favourably with that even of the Lothians.

A considerable lumber trade is still carried on in Morayshire. It is undoubted that at an early period there existed large natural forests at Darnaway, Longmorn, and other parts of the county. They were then *inter regalia*, and the Crown appointed its own keepers. But of these no remains now exist. The woods which now embellish the county are of

purely modern growth, and owe their origin to such enlightened proprietors as the Dukes of Gordon, the Earls of Moray, the Lairds of Grant, the Earls of Fife, the Cummings of Altyre, the Brodies of Brodie and Lethen, and the Grants of Elchies. The soil and the climate assisted their efforts. When Chalmers wrote his 'Caledonia,' he estimated the extent of the trees in the Strathspey district alone at nearly 20,000 acres. At first the timber was conveyed from Strathspey to Garmouth, from which it was exported to the Scottish and English markets in small quantities by means of the coracle or *curach*, a circular boat of ox-hide identical with the bull-boat still in use among the Omaha Indians. These boats held only one person, and were guided by a paddle. The timber was attached by a noose to the navigator's leg—a primitive and hazardous mode of proceeding. About 1730, when the York Buildings Company purchased the timber of the Abernethy woods from the Duke of Gordon, a new method of transportation was inaugurated by Aaron Hill the poet, who was then its secretary. Rafts were constructed on which the timber, in lots of from £20 to £30 in value, were floated down the river. Each voyage, including the return journey by land, lasted for a week, and, including the wages of the floater and his one hired hand, cost about two guineas. Now river-transit has been entirely abolished. Good roads and traction-engines enable the timber to be removed from the woods, wherever they are situated, with an expedition and at a cost which would have seemed incredible to our grandfathers.

Much, perhaps most, of the improvement which has ensued in the development of their resources is undoubtedly due to the establishment of farmers' clubs within both the counties. Useful, however, as has been the work of the



Nairnshire Farmers' Society, it is thrown into the shade by the exertions of the Morayshire Farmers' Club. This energetic and enlightened association, which still exists in full vigour, was instituted in January 1799. It was the outcome of the meeting of "a few friends" held at Pearey's Inn, Elgin, on 14th December 1798. Nothing further was at first intended than to establish a monthly farmers' dinner, to be held on the first Friday of each month (Friday being the weekly market-day), except during the harvest months of August, September, and October. The dinner-hour was to be four o'clock; the cost was never to exceed eighteenpence a-head; and no member was to be permitted to spend more than another 2s. on drink. "The bill was to be brought in by Mr Pearey at six o'clock each day."

These dinners were soon popular, and before many years were over the Farmers' Club had become an institution. At each monthly meeting a question affecting the agricultural interest of the district, arranged beforehand, was discussed, and the decision of the meeting recorded in the minutes. This was possibly at first the club's most useful function. As it consisted of almost all the landowners and tenant-farmers in the county, with a sprinkling of outside members—such as the principal lawyers, doctors, and clergymen of the town—the new notions and the new processes recommended had an extended circulation. Whatever else it was not, the club was certainly practical. It introduced new implements of agriculture; it bought stud-horses for the use of the district; it instituted shows; it gave premiums for excellence in almost every department of agricultural life. What was of even more importance was, that it strove to instil a hopeful spirit into the agricultural community. Its minutes, though they may have occasionally to record periods of extraordinary agricultural

depression, never take a desponding view of things. Those who know anything of the farming community will readily understand how useful an institution which could take a cheery, sensible, moderate view of the situation, whether the needle inclined to fair or foul weather, must be to a class so dependent on the variations of the barometer.

To the non-agricultural mind the radical nature of the change that has ensued cannot be better appreciated than by contrasting the old implements of agriculture, the old dwellings of the people, their old habits, customs, and usages, with the new. When the century was young the wooden plough, with its yoke of from six to eight oxen, whose natural inactivity was goaded into life by the *gaudman* with his long iron-pointed spur or spear, was still in common use. The harrows with wooden tines, which the ploughmen sitting over the fire fabricated in the long winter evenings, had not yet been abandoned. The flail had not given place to the threshing-mill, nor the hook to the reaping-machine. The fanners with their complicated system of wire riddle and sieves had not ceased to exist. The *kellach*, a conical wicker basket suspended on a square frame with wheels—the lineal successor of the old circular creels hung on horses—was still employed to convey manure to the fields. Oxen had not been superseded by horses for the ordinary operations of the farm.

“Prior to the year 1760,” says Leslie, speaking of the old farms in the district,<sup>1</sup> “in the dwellings of the tenants there were neither floors, ceilings, nor chimneys. In a few of them the low wall was rudely reared of stones and clay mortar, and had a small glass window; in one only of the apartments was there any plaster, and it was raked over the walls in the most artless manner. A loft, on which the roof

<sup>1</sup> Leslie's Survey, pp. 58, 59.

rested without any side-wall, distinguished a very few of the most respectable habitations. There was in general but one fire (which served all domestic occasions) in the apartment where the servants and master, with his wife and maiden daughters, lived and fed together. In the higher parts of the district the walls of the office-houses were constructed of stones without mortar, in some cases with alternate courses of stone and turf; and the whole buildings were tightly thatched with sod covered with straw under a rope netting of the same material, at once the sign of poverty and thrift.

“In the lower parts of the country the dwellings of the tenants were more generally of turf, and in a less stormy climate they were for the most part thatched only with sod: they had no windows, or only a small aperture shut by a board upon hinges like a door. In most cases they consisted but of one apartment divided by a timber bedstead, one end of which was closed in by a cupboard, which served also for the larder. The dwelling-house and barn were permanent buildings; the cowhouse and stable were generally rebuilt every summer, their old walls being turned into the dunhill. In the more stormy quarters of the district the house and offices were arranged in two lines, or so constructed as to have the doors mutually sheltered by the opposite building from the penetrating blast or the drifting snow; but in the low parts of Moray the turf hovels were placed in all the irregularity that chance might exhibit.”

In the little village of Garmouth, at the mouth of the Spey, are still to be seen specimens of a curious style of building peculiar to the locality. The material of which they are composed is a species of concrete. On a foundation of rounded weather-worn stones from the beach are erected walls built entirely “of clay made into mortar with straw” and daubed over with lime. It was a warm and comfortable style of

building, even though there was a tendency in the walls, if not very strongly and carefully constructed, to warp from the perpendicular. It is needless to say that it is now entirely a thing of the past.

With improved housing both of master and of men came an improved style of living. The kerosene-oil lamp has superseded the old "fir-candle"<sup>1</sup> as an illuminant. Coal has taken the place of peat as fuel.

Not so very long ago, certainly within the first half of the present century, the use of peat was habitual among the lower classes even of the town of Elgin. It used to be brought down from the surrounding hills in light carts made of rods and bars, by persons who went by the name of "peat-futherers," and who sometimes, it was said, combined with this industry another of a more illicit order. A portrait of one of these worthies is given in a song by a local poet, James Simpson, better known by his *nom de plume* of "Davie Dow," which was very popular in its day :—

" He wore a braid bonnet o' bonnie sky-blue,  
A hammel-spun coat o' the vera same hue,  
Wi' breeks o' that ilk, an' queetikins<sup>2</sup> too,  
An' a plain gabby carl was he :  
He'd a cow an' twa stirkies that low'd i' the byre,  
An' a marey that car'dna for moss or for mire.  
Wi' my fa la, &c.

He'd a handy wee cairt made o' gweed fir rungs,  
Wi' a stiff timmer axtree an' tough *tye* slungs,  
An' it whistled an' shrieked like a thousand tongues,  
An' was heard ower muir an' lea ;

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<sup>1</sup> The rude iron frame which held the fir-candle is locally known by the name of "the peer [poor] man," from the fact that when a vagrant begged and obtained food and shelter for the night he was expected to make himself useful in return by holding the fir-candle while the household discharged their usual nightly tasks.

<sup>2</sup> Cuttikins, spatterdashes or gaiters.

Besides he had an auld peat-barrow,  
 Wi' a couterless plough, an' a tineless harrow.  
 Wi' my fa la, &c.

Now Robbie's feal housie stood far up the hill,  
 Wi' few neebors near't, sae he thocht it nae ill  
 To stow in his pantry a canty bit still,  
 On whilk he did practise a wee ;  
 An' the drappie he brewed was the pure mountain-bead—  
 For the Elgin an' Forres fouk likit it gweed.  
 Wi' my fa la, &c."

It is often said that the old primitive rural life was as cheerless as it was comfortless. This is an entire mistake. The pleasures of the country districts might be simpler than those of the inhabitants of the towns, but they were more numerous, more natural, and more hearty. Every event in a man's or a woman's life furnished an occasion of rejoicing to the whole neighbourhood. Every old festival day of the Church, though what it was meant to symbolise had been forgotten for generations, was religiously observed as an opportunity for merry-making. Every incident in the secular or in the agricultural year served as an excuse for social enjoyment. And if no plausible plea could be found, the dance or the convivial meeting went on without one. Few know how merry rural Scotland was before the days of the school board and the parish council.

The penny wedding of Morayshire, as of other parts of Scotland, was a kindly intended effort to give a young couple in whom the district was interested a sum of ready money with which to start housekeeping. The mode adopted was for the friends of the bride to provide food, drink, and music for the company, which sometimes numbered as many as 300 or 400 persons, and for each guest to pay not only for all that he ate and drank, but to contribute his share to the remuneration of the fiddlers. The

profits accruing to the young people were often from £20 to £30.

The customs observed at penny weddings were of immemorial antiquity, and were as scrupulously adhered to as if they had been religious rites, which some of them undoubtedly were, albeit of pagan origin.

They began with the "booking." This was the giving in of the names of the intended spouses to the session-clerk, in order to the proclamation of the banns. The session-clerk was generally the dominie, and in addition to his fee for proclamation, there was usually a further claim made upon the bridegroom for "ba'mony" for the school children. It was seldom refused, for non-compliance with it entailed an inconvenient penalty. By ancient custom—the school children asserted by law—the boys were entitled to meet the bride as she came out of church, to snatch a shoe off her foot, and to keep it as a pledge till their demands were satisfied. On one occasion not so many years ago this was actually done.

After the "booking" came the "bidding." Three weeks or so before the marriage the bridegroom and his best-man, and the bride and her bridesmaid, called on their respective friends and verbally bade them to the wedding. This part of the ceremony is in vogue among the fisher-people to this day; and the invitation of the bride is in some cases attended with the gift of an apron to wear on the occasion.

The actual festivities lasted four days. They began the night before the marriage with the ceremony of foot-washing. The friends of each party met in the respective houses of the bride and bridegroom, and amidst much horse-play, smearing of legs with grease and soot, and copious libations from the tappit-hen—a green glass bottle holding four quarts of whisky—this very ancient usage was duly complied with.

In the tub in which the bride's feet were washed a wedding-ring was thrown and scrambled for by all the company, male and female. The fortunate finder was sure to be married within the year.

The following day the bridal party proceeded to the manse—where in those days the religious ceremony was always performed—in two separate processions, that of the bride and that of the bridegroom. The bride was escorted by two young men. The rest of the company followed three by three—one woman and two men, then two women and one man. A horse and cart with the bride's "plenishing"—her chest of drawers and her store of linen—brought up the rear. The first person the party met, whoever he might be and however urgent his business, was bound to stop and drink a glass of whisky to the prosperity of the bride from a bottle which one of the young men of the party carried with him. This was called "first-footing." The same custom was observed with the bridegroom's party.

After the religious ceremony had been completed, the bride and bridegroom with their friends proceeded on foot to their future home, preceded by a piper. About 200 yards from the house the young men formed a line, with the object of "running the keal." This was nothing more than a race. The prize of the winner was a kiss from the bride before she entered her dwelling.

When the bridal party reached the homestead they found it surrounded by a joyous company, who fired off pistols and guns, waved flags, and scrambled for coppers as it approached. At the doorway an old woman stood waiting with a plate of bride's-cake in her hand, which she crumbled and threw over the bride as she crossed the threshold.<sup>1</sup> As many as the house would hold were allowed to enter. The rest were

<sup>1</sup> This was the Roman *confarreatio*.

accommodated in the adjoining cottages, or in some barn near by. The wedding feast followed. The first course consisted of broth with shreds of meat and fowl boiled in it; the second of boiled and roast meat and other substantial cates. The whole was washed down with copious libations of whisky. When all had dined heartily, two men who had been selected as managers of the feast went round the company, plate in hand, to collect the "lawin'," which was always 1s. a-head.<sup>1</sup> According to the strict code of rustic gallantry, every lad paid for his lass.

As soon as dinner was over the bridegroom took his wife by the hand and led her to the green in front of the house, to dance the "shamit reel." The best-man immediately advanced and claimed her hand. The bridegroom selected the bridesmaid as his partner. Her partner then asked the bride what was to be "the shame spring." She was expected to answer, "Through the warld will I gang wi' the lad that lo'es me," or some other equally appropriate air. The music then struck up and the dance proceeded, the rest of the company looking on in silence till its close, when the performers were rewarded with repeated rounds of applause. It was a terrible ordeal for a young girl to go through, and well deserved its name.

Dancing amongst the young, and toddy-drinking amongst the old, now became general, and continued for the rest of the day and evening. Any of the lads who chose to give the fiddlers a halfpenny could have his favourite tune played. He then selected the girl he wished to honour, and took the floor with her. As many other couples as the room could hold were allowed to join in the dance. After the fiddlers had played the tune over about a dozen times—which was the

<sup>1</sup> In olden times 1s. Scots was equal to 1d. sterling. Hence the origin of the name penny wedding.



regular allowance—they paused. The lads called out “Kissing-time!” and proceeded to salute their partners. The air was then repeated once or twice more, and the dance ended. The observances of the day were concluded by the bedding of the young couple and the ceremony of throwing the stocking. This was the culminating-point of interest in the whole of the proceedings; for the fortunate person who, in the fierce scramble that ensued, succeeded in getting possession of the bride’s stocking when she flung it off her, was assured of being the next bride or bridegroom in the place.

The third day was devoted to eating, drinking, and generally making merry. On the evening of that day those of the guests who had long distances to go generally took their departure. But on the fourth day, which was always a Sunday, as many of the young couples’ friends who still remained and had not succumbed to the fatigues and dissipation of the previous days, accompanied them solemnly to church. And in this proper and seemly manner the festivities of the penny wedding ended.

Lyke-wakes prevailed in the country districts till about forty years ago. When a death occurred, the first thing to be done after the corpse had been dressed was to lay it out on two chairs at the side of the room. The next was to stop the clock, and to shut up the cat to prevent its walking over the dead body,—for if this occurred, the first person who saw it or touched it would infallibly lose his sight, be attacked with epilepsy, or suffer some other misfortune. Iron in some form—a rusty nail, a knife, a knitting-needle—was thrust into the meal-girnel to prevent its contents from going bad. Then a table was laid out, a white cloth spread over it, and a Bible and Psalm-book, a plate with tobacco and pipes, and a snuff-mull,

placed upon it. All day long, from early morn till eight or nine o'clock at night, up to the day of the funeral, the house was inundated with condoling friends, each of whom was offered, and never refused, a dram. And every night when they had gone the wake began. On the first night the relatives of the dead man watched alone. After that they took the duty in turns, assisted by their friends. At first there was reading of the Bible and singing of psalms. But when it approached the short hours the "books" were shut, pipes were lighted, the whisky-bottle and bread and cheese were produced, and the company settled down to tell stories and otherwise to enjoy themselves. The presence of the dead body had little effect in checking their merriment. There was seldom anything approaching indecorum; but when the morning broke and the doors were opened to admit new visitors, the scene that met their eyes could hardly by any stretch of courtesy be called edifying.

On the day of the funeral no service took place either within the house or at the grave. Indeed, as was once said, "a funeral was scarcely the place for a minister to be at." On returning from the interment the company sat down to the "drudgy" or "dredgy."<sup>1</sup> Originally instituted as a last homage to the dead, it soon degenerated into a mere coarse drinking-bout. "I am sure," says Burt, in his 'Letters from the North,' "it has no sadness attending it, except it be for an aching head next morning." No trace of this unseemly custom now exists.

Both lyke-wakes and penny weddings were from the first a source of irritation to the Reformed Church; for lyke-wakes

<sup>1</sup> The name is derived from the expression "Dirige nos, Domine," forming part of the old Roman Catholic service for the burial of the dead.

were not only a direct legacy from Roman Catholicism,<sup>1</sup> and therefore savoured of idolatry, but both too often resulted in unseemly scenes, occasioning a "great increase in Church scandal."

Again and again we find the Church interfering. On the 16th April 1676 "the Lord Bishop and brethren of the Synod of Murray" passed a resolution limiting the number of persons attending these gatherings, and prohibiting all "piping, dancing, and fidling at pennibridells within doors," and all "obscene lasciviousness and promiscuous dancing" either within or without the house, under pain of public censure and pecuniary mulct. Finding these measures insufficient, they were compelled to have recourse to the secular arm. Among the statutes "revived, ratified, and enacted by the provost, bailies, and common council of the burgh of Elgin upon 14th March 1715," is one forbidding all inhabitants "within the burgh" from promising "to goe to any lyke-wake unless they be in relation to the defunct, or called by his friends, under the pain of ten pounds Scots." And many other illustrations of this policy might be given.

But all-powerful as the Kirk regarded itself, in this matter clerical authority was powerless. General Assemblies might denounce, presbyteries and kirk-sessions might threaten, these customs were too deeply rooted in the affections of the people. It was a stand-up fight between the Church and the people; and in the end, though the Church had the State at its back, the people won. Custom is always stronger than statute. Indeed, as every wise legislator knows, the truest sanction of any statute is that it embodies a custom which commends itself to the

<sup>1</sup> The reading of the Bible and the singing of psalms were nothing more than the *bits* which were wont to be said for the dead.

instincts of the people. And thus, notwithstanding all the thunders of the Church, the "silver brydells" and lyke-wakes continued, until they were abrogated with the consent of the people themselves, who saw their repugnance to modern feeling and intelligence. Yet no candid person, looking back not upon what they became but what they were at first intended to be, will dispute that the sentiment which underlay them was not only not reprehensible, but rather commendable in a very high degree.

The long evenings of winter afforded ample opportunities for social enjoyment, and they were extensively taken advantage of. "Forenichts,"<sup>1</sup> as they were called, from their taking place between twilight and bedtime, were work-parties, where the women brought their wheels and their stockings, where the old wives told "feart" stories, and the old men played cards. And so the hours would pass till it was time for the young men to come in from their work. The whole party then sat down to a comfortable supper of kail and cakes ; and often a dance wound up the evening.

Dances, called "rants" and "tweetles," were also favourite amusements. The "auld grannie" in Grant's inimitable "Penny Wedding,"<sup>2</sup> comparing the dull present with the merry past of her youth, instances both of these as being among the many good things that had passed away :—

"But now the times are altered sair,  
There's little pastime to be seen  
When we go to the country fair,  
Or to the market on the green.

The tweedles an' the pleasant rant,  
Sae common as they used to be,  
Are changed for politics and cant,  
And fondness for the barley-bree."

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<sup>1</sup> Forenicht is the time between twilight and bedtime.

<sup>2</sup> The "Penny Wedding," by John Grant, p. 19.

The rant was a generic term applied to any uproarious merry - meeting at which dancing took place. The "tweetle" was a public assembly much frequented by young people, who each paid a halfpenny for every dance (reel) in which they indulged.<sup>1</sup>

The last school cock-fight in Morayshire took place at New Spynie about seventy years ago. Before that time they were universal all over the district, and eagerly anticipated as one of the most important events of the social year. They took place on Fastern's E'en (Shrove Tuesday), locally known as Brose Day, from the fact that the regulation supper of that day was a particular kind of brose, made of the skimmings of broth, oatmeal, and eggs.

The fight took place in the village schoolroom, the floor of which had been carefully sanded over for the occasion. Each "loon" brought in his cock under his arm, and was accompanied by his parents and acquaintances. The schoolmaster presided, receiving in return for his services a small fee called the "cock penny" from each competitor. The *fugies*, or cocks that would not fight, also fell to him as his perquisite. The boy whose cock won was proclaimed king, and he was looked upon as the hero of the "toun" till next Shrove Tuesday.

The games most popular among the people were shinty and bools (bowls). In the records of the kirk-session of Kinneddar for the year 1666 there are numerous entries referring to the profanation of the Sabbath by persons playing a game which is there called the "Chew." This is nothing else than shinty played with a chew—the fisherman's name for the cork float of their nets—instead of the usual wooden ball. The clubs were in every case of

<sup>1</sup> A description of the tweetle will be found in the 'Elgin Literary Magazine' for January 1830, p. 274.

home manufacture, and were generally made from the wood of the alder-tree. "Bools," on the other hand, was played with heavy iron balls. At Nairn on New Year's Day (Old Style) there was an annual match of both games played on the links by the fishermen. It was the principal amusement of the year, and was eagerly looked forward to. Long before the reintroduction of golf, which has lately added so much to the attractions of Lossiemouth and Nairn, the game was played on the links of Nairn. On the 10th June 1797 the magistrates of that burgh met to roup the grass of the links for the ensuing three years. One of the conditions of the "set" was, that the gentlemen of the town or others should not be prohibited from "playing golf or walking on the whole links at pleasure, or in passing to and from any part of the sea-shore." In Moray there are still more ancient traces of its existence. In the minute-book of the kirk-session of Elgin is an entry dated 19th January 1596, to the effect that on that day Walter Hay, goldsmith, "accusit of playing at the boullis and golf upoun Sondaye in the tym of the sermon," compeared, "and hes actit himself fra this furth vnder the paynes of fyve lib. nocht to commit the lyik outhir afoir or eftir none the tym of the preaching."

In no respect has there been a greater advance than in the food of the agricultural community. The farm-servant of the present day, who has been known to object to second day's broth, and is for ever finding fault with his ample allowance of fresh milk, would turn away with disgust at the food which satisfied his brother hind of a hundred years ago. Kail, nettles, and mugwort, boiled together and thickened with oat-meal, was a favourite soup. "Raw sowens" and "brose"

were used instead of porridge. The farmer and his family fared hardly better than his hinds. Oatmeal was the staple food, and it was all the sweeter if it was the produce of his own land, dried at his own kiln, and ground at his own mill.

Many of the farmers had kilns of their own. Their construction was of the simplest order. On the top of the walls, rafters, called "kebbars," were laid a few feet distant from each other. Across these was placed a layer of pieces of wood, often small fir-trees split in two, which went by the name of "stickles," and above this a layer of straw to form the "bedding" of the kiln. The open space beneath was known as the kiln-logie, and in this the fire was kindled, an opening being left in the wall for the purpose. The utmost care was required to regulate the fire to prevent the whole of this combustible erection being in a blaze. The kiln was one of the greatest attractions of an old-time farm, and many were the superstitions connected with it. Few would venture into one after dark, in case of meeting the "kiln-carle," who was believed to have his home in the logie. Even if he did not make his appearance, the rash intruder was certain to see some other "feart" thing. Once a man who was drying his grain during the night saw a cat run past him and go right through the furnace.

Mills, too, had their uncanny visitants; but these had none of the savage characteristics of the kiln-carle. The fairies who made use of them were, as a rule, welcome guests. They never failed to pay their "multure" by leaving behind them a little fairy meal, which ensured the girdel being full for some years to come.

Bread was the generic term of all the various varieties of what are now called cakes and bannocks of the meal of oat or bear. "Mixed bread" was composed of equal parts of

both; "pease-bread" and "bean-bread" when pease-meal or bean-meal was added. "Thick bread" was fired on both sides on the girdle; "hard" or "fact bread" was fired on one side only, and then placed in front of the fire to be fully baked. "Fat bread" was when a little cream was mixed with the leaven; "watered bread" where the cake had only been washed over with cream or butter-milk. The difference between bread and bannocks was, that in the one case the mixture was rolled out on the baking-board, and in the other was kneaded with the knuckles only.

There was no art of domestic economy which required greater attention than the operation of baking. The slightest negligence might entail serious results. If a woman did not keep her girdle full, she would have to wait for her bridegroom on her marriage-day. If she took it off the fire with the "bread" upon it, the bread would not last. If she burned the cakes, she would be made to weep before they were eaten. The same thing would happen if she sang when she was baking. It was unlucky in the highest degree to count the cakes in a "baking," or to turn them twice on the girdle, or to lay them flat instead of on edge when they were taken off the fire. No man would care to marry a woman who let any of the meal fall on the floor. She was certain to bring him trouble from her unthriftiness. It was worse than bad manners, it was positively unlucky, to begin to eat your wedge of cake from the "croun" or thick end of the "quarter"; and to lay cakes on the "man" or wooden trencher on which they were commonly served, right side up—that is, in the same way as they lay on the girdle—was a direct insult to your guest.

"Old people looked with much reverence on meal as well as bread. To abuse in any way either the one or the other was regarded as profane. To trample underfoot the smallest



quantity of meal or the least piece of bread was considered a mark of one devoid of a proper spirit. To cast anything of what was called "meal-corn" into the fire was set down as nearly allied to crime. Every particle of meal and every crumb of bread had to be carefully swept up and thrown out in such a place as to be picked up as food by some of God's creatures."<sup>1</sup> A similar custom prevails in Sweden to this day.

Another very common appendage of a northern country farm was a still. Private distillation for home consumption was only abolished in 1820.<sup>2</sup> Before that time whisky was as legitimate and ordinary a product of a farm as the manufacture of meal :<sup>3</sup>—

"A cogie o' yill an' a pickle oatmeal,  
An' a dainty wee drappie o' whisky,  
Was oor forefathers' dose for to swill down their brose,  
An' keep them aye cheery an' frisky."

In the beginning of the present century there was a farmer of the better class who lived in a glen on the confines of Banffshire and Elginshire. He had five daughters, all of whom, in accordance with the simple style of living which then prevailed, were not above "putting their hands to the plough." In addition to their more legitimate duties within doors, they took their own share of the outside work of the farm on such special occasions as sheep-shearing, corn-winnowing, and the cutting and drying of the peats. From the lint and the wool produced upon it they made their own underclothing, and spun

<sup>1</sup> Kilns, Mills, Millers, Meal, and Bread. By Rev. Walter Gregor, M.A., LL.D. London : David Nutt. 1894.

<sup>2</sup> By the Act of 1 George IV. c. 74, sec. 17. By the 2d section of the same Act all distilleries of spirits were obliged to be licensed.

<sup>3</sup> Whisky was certainly manufactured in Scotland in the sixteenth century, but for three hundred years it was the drink of the poorer classes only. Beer, claret, and brandy were the only drinks of all who aspired to be looked upon as gentry.

the material for their own dresses. In addition to this, each received from her father six bushels of barley annually, and the use of the bothy for a week to convert her grain into whisky. Such was the "pin-money" which young ladies were allowed in those days.

Before the time of the Poor Law the poor of each parish were supported by its inhabitants. The care of the indigent was primarily the duty of the kirk-session, who did the best they could, by collections at the church doors, by fees for the use of the pall or mortcloth, by the fines of persons under discipline, and other similar expedients, to alleviate the misery of the deserving. But as these were insufficient, much remained for private charity to do. It says a good deal for the people that claims for assistance were seldom if ever refused. The tendency was rather the other way. Many who in our days, at least, would have been regarded as falling within the provisions of the stringent laws against mendicancy which then existed, obtained a relief which they did not deserve.

In Morayshire, as in other parts of Scotland, there existed within the memory of the last generation a class of persons who were known as "gentle beggars"—persons who at one time or another had occupied a fair social position, but, in most cases through their own fault, had fallen upon evil days, and who, though they were too proud to work, were not too proud to beg. They went about from mansion-house to farm, from manse to croft, claiming food and lodging, and everywhere demanding, and as a rule receiving, both of these of the best. They were great nuisances, and sometimes ingenious expedients were resorted to in order to get rid of them. On one occasion, in the beginning of this century, one of these gentry came to a manse in the neighbourhood of Elgin. He was informed by the clergy-

man's wife that her husband was from home, but that of course he could have bed and lodging for the night.

"Only I am afraid," said his hostess, "that I cannot offer you such a good supper as you might expect. To tell you the truth, I have only roast and boiled."

This did not sound so bad, and the gentle beggar expressed himself as satisfied. But when the supper was served it consisted of a roast "yellow haddie" and boiled "sowens." He never came back again.

As for the poor of a lower order and less exacting kind, everything was done to spare them the mortification of feeling their poverty. It is difficult nowadays to realise the kindly feeling which prevailed towards them. In almost every district where a family had come to misfortune a collection was instituted to put them on their feet again, if that were possible. Two young men were selected to go from house to house ringing the "Thiggars' Chant"; and if this was not successful, the various members of the family were ungrudgingly welcomed at the firesides of their more prosperous neighbours.

It is hardly to be wondered at that, in a district where the power of the Roman Catholic Church was once so strong, the social observance of the old Church festivals died hard, and in some instances is not even yet extinct. What helped to perpetuate it was the fact that in connection with most of them a fair was held in the neighbouring "burrow-toun"—an event of the highest interest and importance in country eyes. Elgin, Forres, and Nairn had each six fairs in the year; the more important villages—such as Findhorn, Lhanbryde, and Garmouth in Morayshire, and Auldearn and Cawdor in Nairnshire—had smaller markets of their own.

To this day, too, the old Church festivals serve as almanacs

to the country-people ; perhaps we should rather say as mile-stones, marking the progress of the rural year :—

“ First comes Candlemas,”<sup>1</sup>

says the old country rhyme,

“ And then the new meen [moon],  
Then the Tuesday after that,  
That’s Fastern’s E’en.”<sup>2</sup>

Again—

“ If Candlemas Day be fair and clear,  
The half o’ the winter’s to gang an’ mair ;  
If Candlemas Day be dark and foul,  
The half o’ the winter’s past at Yule.”

Another rhyme runs thus—

“ Fastern’s E’en’s meen oot,  
And the next meen hicht ;  
Then the Sunday after that,  
That’s Pace<sup>3</sup> nicht.”

These rhymes, however, were no more peculiar to the district than were the observances of the feasts they commemorated.

On Fastern’s E’en (Shrove Tuesday) the great feature of the evening’s amusement was the baking of the “sautie bannock.” This was a thick cake composed of eggs, milk, and oatmeal, with a little salt ; and, as with the Christmas plum-pudding of modern times, every one present was expected to assist at the operation. Like it, too, all sorts of “unconsidered trifles” were dropped into the mixture, each article indicating the fortune of the person in whose share it was subsequently found. The girl who got the ring would be married the first ; she who captured the halfpenny would assuredly marry a rich bachelor ; she who found the farthing would have to be contented with a widower. The button meant that her husband would be a tailor ; the piece of

<sup>1</sup> The 2d February—the Purification of the Virgin Mary.

<sup>2</sup> Shrove Tuesday.

<sup>3</sup> Easter.

straw, a farmer ; the piece of cloth, a clothier ; the nail, a blacksmith,—and so on. The baker of the cake had to maintain perfect silence through all the operation. Every means was attempted to make her speak. If she did, another took her place.

When the cake was baked, it was cut into as many pieces as there were unmarried persons in the room and placed in the apron of the baker. She was then blindfolded and placed with her back against the door. The lads and lasses then passed before her and received each a piece of bannock at her hands. According to what was discovered in it, his or her fate was sealed.

Beltane, or May Day, was a festival in the district within the memory of men still living. There was no May-pole as in England, but "Beltane bannocks" were an institution. They were thick kneaded cakes of oatmeal, "watered" with a thin batter made of milk-and-cream, whipped eggs, and a little oatmeal. On May Day about noon the young folks went to the rocks and high ground and rolled them down hill. If one broke, its owner would die before next Beltane. After the rolling, the bannocks were solemnly eaten, part being always left on the ground for the "cuack" or cuckoo. A little bit was taken home, too, to be dreamed upon. It was the only ceremonial bannock in which eggs formed an essential constituent.

On Beltane Day all the cattle in the district were put out to pasture.

Michaelmas (September 29), the Feast of St Michael and All Angels, was not a festival for which the peasantry of Moray could be expected to have any special regard ; for it was by the bright light of the Michaelmas moon that their Highland neighbours made those fierce raids upon their homesteads which, till comparatively recent days, was their principal bane. Hence the local saying, that the High-

landers "paid their daughters' tocher by the light of the Michaelmas moon."

The Michaelmas Market in Nairn was an occasion of more than ordinary rejoicing. The old rhyme with which the children collected their fairings on Michaelmas eve, though probably not peculiar to the district, is pretty enough and venerable enough to be quoted:—

"To-night's the market evening—  
To-morrow's the market-day,—  
And we shall get our fairings,  
And we shall march away.  
The cock shall crow,  
The hen shall lay,  
The drum shall beat,  
An' the pipe shall play,  
For to-morrow is the merry, merry market-day."

Hallowe'en, or All Saints' Eve (October 31), was observed in Moray and Nairn as sedulously and with much the same ceremonies as in the other parts of Scotland. It is the longest lived of all the Church festivals. To this day the children of Elgin visit all the grocers' shops in the town, and receive their customary toll of nuts and apples.

The Reformation abolished Christmas as the greatest festival of the Christian year, but it could not abolish it as an occasion on which to make merry. The ceremonial fare consisted of two kinds—the Yule bread, and a sort of sour cake usually called "sour poos." The one was a thin bannock of oat-meal—the only difference between it and any other bannock being that it had to be cut into four quarters before being placed on the girdle. This was probably symbolical of the cross. The other was a cake the leaven of which had been moistened with water poured off "sowens," which gave it a peculiar acid flavour. It was essential that both these kinds of cake should be baked during the night—at any rate, before

daybreak on Christmas morning. In Garmouth the Yule bread had to be baked "before the deil gweed [went] by Binns"—a hill in the immediate vicinity. As the "deil" was popularly regarded as an early riser, this compelled the household to be astir betimes. In baking the Yule bread, a cake had to be prepared for each member of the family. What happened to that cake in the course of the day—whether it broke or whether it remained whole till the proper time for its consumption arrived—was emblematic of the fate of the owner during the coming year. The old superstition, that on Christmas eve exactly at twelve o'clock every living thing "voices" its meed of joy on the birth of our Saviour, was an article of faith in every Morayshire homestead. The kindly custom, too, of giving the whole of his stock a supper of unthreshed corn was also religiously observed by the farmer. And to guard them from the malign influence of witches, fairies, and other powers of evil who were especially industrious at this season, he never omitted to hang up branches of the rowan-tree over the door and above the walls of the byre.

But none of the old festivals of the Church had so strong a hold on the affections of the people as had that of the essentially pagan festival of Hogmanay—the last night of the year. It was the climax of the "daft days." New Year's Day itself was only its corollary.

In rural Moray it was, and is, though sadly shorn of its picturesque features, the saturnalia of the year. There was no exemption from its influence. The sternest precisian, the veriest churl, was bound to be jolly on Hogmanay. Even an elder of the Church might get drunk on that occasion without damage to his reputation. In its conception it was not so much a season of unbending and relaxation as an occasion for the exercise of such social virtues as charity, hospitality, and brotherly kindness.

On Hogmanay night the young men of the district went from door to door, visiting their friends, demanding admission at farm and cottage alike, under the pretext that they were collecting alms for the poor. When a band was heard approaching, the "guidwife" of the house armed herself with a besom, advanced to the door, and responded to the knock by bringing her broom "over the head" of the leader, to signify her intention of defending the homestead against the troops of masterful beggars who in days not long bygone had been in the habit of oppressing the countryside. To show that their intentions were of a different character, the band then struck up the "Thiggars' Chant," which ran as follows :—

" The gweed New Year is noo begun,  
Besouthen,<sup>1</sup> besouthen !  
An' a' the beggars begin to run,  
An' awa' by southron toun !

We wish ye a' a gweed New Year,  
Besouthen, besouthen !  
Wi' werth o' health an' dainty cheer,  
An' awa' by southron toun !

Rise up, gweed wife, an' be na swear,  
Besouthen, besouthen !  
An' deal yer fordels<sup>2</sup> to the puir,  
An' awa' by southron toun !

It's nae for oorsels that we come here,  
Besouthen, besouthen !  
But to crave yer charity to the puir,  
An' awa' by southron toun !

We beg you meal—we beg you maut,  
Besouthen, besouthen !  
We beg for siller to buy them saut,  
An' awa' by southron toun !

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<sup>1</sup> Besouthen, to the southward—pronounced "Be soothie in."

<sup>2</sup> Fordels, things prepared in readiness for future use.



If meal an' maut wi' you be scant,  
 Besouthen, besouthen !  
 We'll kiss the maidens afore we want,  
 An' awa' by southron toun !

If ye hae plenty an' winna gie,  
 Besouthen, besouthen !  
 The deil will get ye when ye dee,  
 An' awa' by southron toun !

Oor shoon are made o' the red coo's hide,  
 Besouthen, besouthen !  
 Oor feet are cauld, we canna bide,  
 An' awa' by southron toun ! ”

The door was then thrown open, and the company invited to enter in the following verses :—

“ Come in, come ben, ye're welcome here,  
 Besouthen, besouthen !  
 Ye'll get a share o' oor New Year cheer,  
 An' awa' by southron toun !

There's plenty here, baith but an' ben,  
 Besouthen, besouthen !  
 An' something in the tappit hen,  
 An' awa' by southron toun ! ”

Yet if there was more mirth and jollity than at present, there was also occasionally more suffering. Periods of scarcity were not uncommon. Chambers, in his ‘Domestic Annals of Scotland,’ records eight instances of severe dearths—two in the sixteenth, four in the seventeenth, and two in the eighteenth century—prior to 1740. There were summer dearths and there were winter dearths. A heavy rainfall, a cold season, a poor harvest, entailed untold misery on man and beast. The food supply of the country districts depended almost entirely on the growth of cereals. The thousand and one substitutes which modern enterprise has introduced were unknown. The country had to rely on its

own produce and on nothing more. When the oats and barley of Moray failed, the privations of the people, especially in its upper reaches, were intense. Meal, which was the staff of life, had to be imported with infinite labour and at infinite cost from Perthshire, from Forfarshire, even from the Lothians. There were times when the country people, to keep themselves alive, had to bleed their cattle in the byre to make their scanty supply of meal more nourishing: 1782 was one of those years. The harvest was so late that in some districts the farmers were shearing at Christmas, and little remained of last season's meal. Two old spinsters at Orton managed to keep body and soul together during the winter on the milk of a goat and the dust that remained at the bottom of their girdel. A woman in Dundurcas, with a numerous young family, "was often a week without any food beyond an egg and a turnip." A minister of a small rural parish now incorporated with its larger neighbour suffered such privations that, telling his housekeeper to do the best for herself, he locked the manse door and set out for Edinburgh; nor was he ever seen in the district again. In one case a well-to-do farmer, who was known to be in the act of stocking his girdel, had the door of his house broken open as he was sitting down to supper, and the sacks carried off before his eyes and in his own carts. Though the men were known, the farmer did not dare to prosecute them. Potatoes were introduced for the first time into Morayshire between the years 1728 and 1740, and were for long after regarded as a mere luxury. In 1854 Morayshire ranked as the sixteenth among the potato-growing counties in Scotland, and Nairnshire as the thirty-first. Turnips as food for cattle were a still later importation; but in Morayshire their value was almost immediately recognised. In 1857 there were 12,757 acres under this crop; in 1881 the acreage was 16,659 — an increase of 3922: and

the cultivation still goes on in very much the same ratio. In Nairnshire, on the other hand, there has been a marked decrease. In 1884 Morayshire stood ninth, and Nairnshire twenty-fifth, among the turnip-growing counties of the kingdom.

Whenever a rural and secluded community awakes to a sense of its material importance, its first tendency is to depreciate everything antiquated, however cherished it may hitherto have been. The old lore and prejudices of its ancestors are cast aside as being unsuitable to its altered condition. The rush of new ideas sweeps away the old customs, the old superstitions, the old follies of the district, as the March gales sweep away the snows of winter. Half a century of progress, and scarcely a trace of them remains.

This has been the case in both Moray and Nairn. Yet from the few vestiges which still survive it may be asserted, with some degree of certainty, that the superstitions of these two counties differed in no essential degree from those prevalent over the rest of the north of Scotland. It is scarcely possible at this time of day to detect in them any traces of distinct racial origin. On the other hand, there are few to be found in other districts of Scotland which have not at one time or another existed in this locality. It cannot, perhaps, be claimed for these counties, at any rate after Roman Catholic days, that they ever led the van in civilisation. On the contrary, they seem to have formed even from the first a sort of backwater, in which all the old useless lumber of ignorance, prejudice, and superstition found a sure haven. But the change which has come over them since their exceptional natural advantages as a farming district have come to be recognised, not only by the rest of the country but by their own inhabitants, has had this effect, that it has placed almost

insuperable obstacles in the way of those who are curious as to the constitution of their old life. There are few parts of Scotland where it is more difficult to acquire anything beyond a mere superficial knowledge of the old inhabitants of the district. Yet even now a bulky volume might be written on the domestic superstitions of the district. There was not a single act of everyday life which was not trammelled with rules, the slightest breach of which might entail consequences of the most serious nature. To acquire them was an education which required a lifetime. Hence the most mischievous apostles of superstition were the "auld wives"—male and female—of the hamlet. And as the ratio of coincidences is much greater than is generally supposed, they never wanted a well-authenticated instance to prove the truth of their assertions. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that what is often regarded as a mere superstition is, like a proverb, very often merely a reduction into concrete form of the experience of many previous generations. Such, for instance, may have been the belief that if a landed proprietor's first child was a girl, the estate might soon lack an heir; and that a child born after its father's death is always kind to its mother. Equally reasonable is the idea that a child's face should always be covered up in the cradle, otherwise it will grow up pale or "like the colour of the sun." There may be sound sense, too, in never allowing very young children to eat any animal food except the white flesh of a fowl; and in the conviction that much rocking of the child in its cradle caused water in the head. There is much, too, to be said for the belief that a small thin neck in a new-born child is a sign of a short life; and that if a child keeps its hands closed when it sleeps it will turn out close-fisted or "grippy" in after-life.

There is a certain amount of common-sense, too, in the credence that a child's clothes should never be left out of

doors at night to dry ; and that a woman after having been churched should not return to her own home without partaking of meat and drink. The church was often a long distance from the homestead, and a drink of "mulled porter," which was the correct thing on such occasions, or a bite of bread and cheese, must often have been to the weak and tired woman a very welcome refreshment. The same is the case with the belief that it is unlucky for a woman, before churching, to perform any domestic office, such as drawing water or taking meal from the girmel. And there is doubtless a useful moral lesson conveyed in the saying that it is unlucky to look at one's own face in a glass.

But it is difficult to explain such apparently absurd notions as that the first time an infant is taken out of doors it should wear a red thread round its neck ; that if a child's first tooth appeared in the upper jaw it would be short-lived ; that when a child was taken out to be baptised, bread and cheese should be carried along with it to prevent its ever after suffering from hunger ; that it was unlucky to put a baby into a new cradle ; that the cradle should be placed at the back of the apartment with its head towards the door ; that it was equally unlucky to rock a cradle lightly ; that if a mouse crept over a child's feet it would stop its growth ; that some frightful disaster would happen to the infant if it was shown its face in a looking-glass before it had got its teeth ; that harelip is produced by a mother stepping over a hare's lair during the period of pregnancy ; that during the same period a woman should not put a stitch into any garment she is wearing ; that a live coal should always be put in the water in which one washes his feet, otherwise a corpse will soon be in the house ; that to dream of rats or mice means an enemy ; that a woman with child should not clean her feet, though muddy with walking, before going into church, otherwise her infant will

have club-feet ; that if the combings of hair, when thrown into the fire, smoulder away, death will ensue by drowning ; that one might as well keep a corpse in the house overnight as the water in which his feet have been washed ; that one should never tie her garter before tying her shoes ; that "a mole on the back abeen the breath" signifies death by drowning ; that it is ominous of death to laugh, whistle, or sing before breakfast ; that bees die before a death ; that it is unlucky to walk along the middle of a road at night, seeing that the "foregang" of a funeral always does so ; that you should never cross a road to meet a friend ; that if the cattle on first being let out after spring ran wildly through the fields, scraping up the earth with their hoofs and throwing it over their backs, a death would ensue in the family before the year was out ; that if horses were restless in their stalls during the night, the place is haunted by a spirit ; that "neid fire"—the fire produced by rubbing together two pieces of stone—is a cure for diseases in cattle ; and such other vain imaginings.

The belief in the "dead-candle" was one of the most deeply-rooted superstitions of the district. When a death was about to occur in a house, a mysterious light was seen issuing from the cottage and winding its way slowly but surely in the direction of the churchyard. Equally implicitly believed in was the notion that if a death was not communicated to the bees the moment it had occurred, they would die immediately after. A custom as old as classical times was that of throwing a coin into the grave as the coffin was being lowered into it. It was not, however, to pay the deceased's ferry across the Styx, but to acquire for all time coming the ground in which it was buried. Salt is to this day laid on a body the moment life has departed ; and, as in other parts of Scotland, a "spale" or "waste" on a burning candle indicates an approaching death.

A superstition closely resembling that of the “nuggle” or “shoopiltee” of the Shetland Islands, and the “echuisque” of the Highlands, and possibly a relic of the old pagan practice of river-worship, is that of the water-horse. It is a kelpie which assumes the form of a black horse, and haunts the vicinity of water. There is hardly a loch within the two counties where it has not been seen. It is always ready to allow itself to be mounted. Sometimes it shows itself saddled and bridled. But if any one unthinkingly jumps on its back he immediately finds himself as if glued to it, and it is ten chances to one if the next moment he does not find himself struggling beneath the dark waters of the loch. It has this remarkable property, too, that though it seems only able to accommodate one person, it can carry any number on its back. To “sain” oneself, or to make the sign of the cross, was sufficient to release one from its clutches.

Another long-lived superstition was a belief in the efficacy of certain holy wells as a cure for disease. The well of St Mary at Orton, another well of the same name in Elgin, the Braemou or Braemuir well at Hopeman, and others, were all believed to be blessed with curative powers. To drink or to wash in their waters was a remedy which—such is faith—seldom proved to be otherwise than infallible. Like the pilgrimages to holy places, such as the Chapel of Grace in the parish of Kinneddar, they resembled the other superstitions of the district in being a relic of Roman Catholic days.

Witches and warlocks were as plentiful a crop in Moray and Nairn as in other parts of Scotland. The treatment they received, too, was the same. The wretched creatures who fell under the bane of local ill-will or local ignorance

were imprisoned, tortured, and done to death, often with fiendish cruelty.

In a piece of hollow ground to the eastward of the cathedral there existed, within the memory of persons yet alive, the stagnant remains of what was once a deep pool of water. The place is still known by the name of the Order Pot—an evident corruption for Ordeal; for it was here that, in the days when witchcraft was a capital offence, many a poor old woman, guilty of no other crimes than poverty and old age, underwent the ordeal by water. The pool is referred to in a retour of 22d May 1604 as *nunc destructa*,<sup>1</sup> and the ground now forms part of a nurseryman's garden. The Order Pot was believed to have a subterranean connection with the Lossie, and an old prophecy predicted that some day—

“ The Order Pot and Lossie grey  
Would sweep the Chan'ry Kirk away.”

But the cathedral still stands, though in ruins, to mock the prediction.

It is only by looking back upon the absurdities that, till the present century had reached its meridian, were articles of faith amongst even the most intelligent persons, that one can gain an adequate conception of the rapidity of modern intellectual progress.

Fifty years ago and less, when a child did not seem to thrive, it was universally believed that its heart had been turned. A wise woman was sent for. She came bringing with her a heart-shaped piece of lead. The little patient's breast was exposed. Then the witch, taking the leaden heart in her hand, turned it round and round over the child's body, as one winds up a watch with a key, con-

<sup>1</sup> Under the Act 1563, Queen Mary.



cluding the farce by assuring the anxious parents that the heart underneath was now acting in accord with the one she was moving. Then she pocketed her fee—always a liberal one—and departed.

Much about the same period a clay image, or *corps creagh*, nearly life-size, was found under a dripping bank of the river near the town of Nairn. It was so placed that the water dropped over its heart. When broken open it was found full of needles and pins. It had been placed there by a notorious witch of the day, who had been hired by a girl to compass the death of a man who had slighted her. When the clay dissolved the man would certainly die. He was only saved from that fate by the accidental discovery of the image. Once a beggar woman, known to be a witch, praised the beauty of the child of a countrywoman who had given her an alms. The child immediately screamed violently. It was plain the witch's evil eye had fallen upon her. As soon as she was gone, the child's mother and grandmother tied their aprons together, and holding them out in the form of a circle, passed first the child, and then a peat, three times through the circle, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The peat was then thrown on the fire and burned, and the child laid in its cradle. As the last fragments of the peat were consumed the infant fell into a quiet peaceful slumber, and the anxious mother knew that the spell had been removed.

When a cow had been bewitched there was a sure mode of discovering the witch. This was to put a quantity of new pins into a pot, then to pour a little of the cow's milk over them, and allow the whole to simmer but not to boil. Ten to one the person who had bewitched the animal would enter the cottage on some "thieveless errand" and lift the pot off the fire.

A witch had a fair daughter who loved a fisherman. He played her false. The mother and daughter then took a "cog"—a circular wooden bowl—and carried it to a spot from which the faithless lover's boat could be seen as it passed on its homeward way. In a short time the witch bade her daughter go to the point of the headland and see if the boat was visible. She came back in a few moments, saying that as it passed the headland it was overturned, and the crew were struggling in the water. Pointing to the tub, the witch bade her daughter observe that the cog was floating bottom upwards. But the man escaped. As soon as he discovered who was the cause of his mishap he determined to take steps to protect himself from further mischief. Entering the witch's cottage, he fell upon her and proceeded to draw blood "abeen [above] her breath"—that is, he cut her on the forehead in the shape of a cross. The man suffered no further inconvenience, but the woman bore a black band on her forehead to her dying day.

Witches had the power of transforming themselves at will into the shape of certain animals. But the form of a hare was that which was most commonly assumed. One of the innumerable stories illustrative of this is fathered on James Brodie, the celebrated Laird of Brodie, whose career has been already referred to. He was out shooting one day when he saw a hare in front of him. This hare was the most amusing animal of its kind he had ever encountered. He fired at it half-a-dozen times, but always missed it; and every time he missed, the creature sat and looked at him with a calm imperturbability which was aggravating in the extreme. At last the truth dawned upon him. The hare was a witch. He drew a sixpence from his pocket, loaded his gun with it, and fired. It hit the hare in the thigh, but it limped away before he was able to reload. He followed its trail by the

blood which dropped from the wound. It led him to the cottage of a woman who had an evil reputation in the district. Entering the house, he found the woman lying in bed. "Turn down the blanket," said the laird, "till I get my sixpence out of your hip." The woman refused, but he would not be denied. At last she consented. The laird reclaimed his sixpence and went away rejoicing.

Such stories might be multiplied indefinitely. Of course no one nowadays admits the existence of witchcraft; yet few amongst the peasantry will be found to disbelieve tales founded on the evidence of their mothers and grandmothers. The utmost that can be expected from them is the admission that the age of witchcraft, as of miracles, is past.

On the 24th June 1736 witchcraft ceased to be a crime inferring the penalty of death, and the punishment of persons pretending to exercise the art was limited to a year's imprisonment, with exposure on the pillory. But if the Parliament of Great Britain was disposed to leave witches and warlocks alone, this was very far from being the intention of the Church. For long afterwards it continued to deal with such persons as "charmners," and amenable to ecclesiastical discipline.

A strong line of demarcation has always existed between the agriculturists of the inland districts and the fisher-people of the coast. This is due in some measure to their different racial origin, but infinitely more so to the diversity in their pursuits.

Most of the social institutions which characterised the agricultural community — such as penny weddings, lyke-wakes, the observance of Hallow E'en, Fastern's E'en, and Hogmanay — were adopted by the fisher-folk, and lingered longer amongst them than farther afield. But in addition there were

others proper to themselves which, with the intense conservatism of their nature, they still cherish lovingly, and with which they as yet show little intention to dispense.

Of these we may instance two,—the "burning of the clavie" among the fishermen of Burghead, and the "casting of the cavel" among the fishermen of Nairn. Both are remanets from the days of the Norsemen, and may possibly be older still.

The burning of the clavie has been often described.

On Old Yule night, as dusk comes on, the youth of the village proceed to the shop of one of the local merchants and procure a couple of strong empty barrels and a supply of tar. A hole is formed in the bottom of one of them, and into this the end of a strong pole some five feet long is inserted and nailed into position. The other barrel is now broken up and placed within the first; the tar is poured over it, and the whole set on fire by a burning peat. The blazing clavie is then carried in procession round the old boundaries of the burgh—in olden times it used to visit also all the fishing-boats in the harbour,—and this perambulation completed, it is taken to the top of a little eminence called the Doorie and set upon a stone structure erected by the superior of the village for the purpose. After burning for about twenty minutes the barrel is lifted from its socket and rolled down the western slope of the hill. A furious rush is now made to capture the blazing fagots, which are carefully preserved, to keep off misfortune from their possessors, till the following year.

The whole scene is singularly weird and impressive. The dark, sullen, northern night; the wreathing smoke of the smouldering beacon; the twisting streams of fire rushing down the sloping hill; the eager upturned faces of the spectators—bronzed and bearded fishermen, white-haired old

women, and bright-eyed children ; the rush, the scuffle, the shouts, the screams, the laughter of the crowd in its efforts to secure the smoking embers, make up a picture which, once seen, is not readily forgotten.

This interesting custom has been the object of a vast amount of antiquarian research, but with little proportionate result. It is generally conceded that it is symbolical of the winter solstice, when the sun, as was believed, sinks beneath the ocean. But nothing absolutely certain is known about its origin. Similar customs have been found in Brittany and in Wales ; and till within recent years an almost identical rite was in use on Old Yule night in Lerwick, the capital of the Shetland Islands. Even the meaning of the word "clavie" is matter of doubt. Those who regard Burghead as having been a Roman station derive it from the word *clavus*, a nail, and support this opinion by the fact that the barrel containing the tar is nailed on to its supporting pole. A more probable derivation, however, is from the Celtic *claibh*, a basket, thus indicating the form of the burning tub.

It is perhaps impossible to claim for the custom of "casting the cavel" an assured Norse origin, though it is most common in those parts of Scotland which were visited by the dragonships of the Vikings. It certainly, however, existed in Scandinavia from the earliest times, and is still to be found in some districts of Sweden.

On a calm summer evening, as the holiday visitor lounges about the quay at Nairn, watching the fishing-boats with their brown sails coming lazily round the point of the pier, or perhaps lost in admiration at one of those gorgeous sunsets, of which, one is almost inclined to think, Nairn has the monopoly in the north of Scotland, he may suddenly find himself accosted by a grey-haired old fisherman who civilly requests him to do him and his mates a favour. He is conducted a few steps

forward to a spot where he finds himself confronted by six slithering heaps of freshly caught fish, their glistening scales reflecting all the greens and yellows and russets of the waning sunlight. Five of these heaps are the share which belongs to the crew; the other is that of the boat. In front of these is ranged a row of six stones. Each of them the stranger is asked to lift in succession, and to place at one of the heaps.

This method of partition by lot was at one time common all over the north of Scotland. Leslie, in the glossary appended to his 'Survey of Moray,' explains the word "keavle" as "the part of a field which falls to one on a division by lots." Bellenden, in his 'Chronicles,' speaks of all "the landis of Scotland being cassin in cavyll among the nobyllis thereof," when King Fergus was resident in Argyle. The custom is also recognised in the old Burrow Lawes of King David I. (c. 59), and in the genetal code of regulations for the "societies of merchands" within Scotland, commonly called the Statutes of the Gild (c. 43), agreed to by the representatives of the various then existing crafts at Berwick-upon-Tweed in 1283-84. The word is said to be derived from an old Suevo-Gothic root meaning a twig or rod. The use of the stone is, of course, only a local substitution.

Another usage—now, however, extinct—believed to be of Scandinavian origin, was the custom called "caplaken." It was a gratuity given to the skippers of merchant vessels trading from Moray Firth ports, and, as appears from old charter-parties, it often took the form of a new boat. *Laken* is said to be a Danish word meaning the crest or ornament for a cap presented by the crew of a Viking ship which had made a successful voyage to its leader. In this sense the word is still used in a children's game in Westmoreland, and is also found amongst the fishermen of the little village of St Combs in Buchan.

To-names,<sup>1</sup> or, as the word is locally pronounced, "tee-names," are common, though not so much so as in the fishing villages farther east along the coast because less necessary. "A to-name or 'title,' as the fishermen call it, is a kind of 'eke-name'—that is, a nickname, but holding a position between a surname and a nickname." In a small community where the list of surnames proper is limited, and where intermarriage prevails, it is often difficult to distinguish between persons whose Christian names and surnames are identical. Hence the necessity for some distinctive mark. The to-name supplied this. It may be a name adopted from a person's physical peculiarities, or from the place of his home, or from his occupation; but it serves its purpose to distinguish him from others of the same individual and gentilitian appellation. Such to-names, when once adopted, are recognised by custom as forming part of their owners' legal designations, and often descend to their children. In time they may even supersede the original surname. Hence, as a recent writer has remarked,<sup>2</sup> the to-name is the result of "a process precisely similar to that which originated surnames" in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Amongst to-names of the Morayshire and Nairnshire county towns and villages are to be found, with others less original, "Gilp," "Willochan," "Bo," "Scottie," "Bailie," "Bochel," "Buchan," and "Duggin." As yet it has not become necessary to adopt such polysyllabic combinations as "Jock's-Wull's-Williamie's-Wullsie," which the same writer instances as existing in the village of St Combs.

Superstition, rife though it was amongst the agricultural community, was even more so among the fisher-people of

<sup>1</sup> German, *Zuname*.

<sup>2</sup> Dr Cramond of Cullen, in an article on to-names in 'Scotsman,' September 1889.

the coast. The same prejudice against clergymen, the same objection to taking women or cats on board when engaged in anything connected with their fishing, the same inexplicable aversion to certain surnames, the same dislike to calling certain things and places by their proper names, which prevails in other fishing communities in Scotland, are found in Moray and Nairn. Salmon, for instance, could never be mentioned on board a boat except by the name of "Spey codling," or a horse except as the "four-footed beast." Swine, even in the shape of ham or bacon, was as accursed a thing to the Morayshire fishermen as to the Jews. The mere accidental utterance of the word would immediately be met with a cry of "Cauld iron!"<sup>1</sup> and a rush to lay hold of anything made of that metal that was handy, if it was even the heel of their boot. The "Tam o' Ron," near Garmouth, one of their landmarks, was always spoken of as "the bank o' red yird."

Reading over the long list of their prejudices, one might be inclined to think that they spent all their time, both on sea and land, looking out for presages of good or ill luck. It was unlucky to shoot their nets on the larboard side of the boat; it was unlucky to see a salmon leap in front of the boat; it was unlucky to whistle when on board; it was unlucky to taste food before the fish were taken; or to leave the creel which contains the line mouth uppermost after it had been cast; or the "baler" except on its face; or not to draw blood from the fish the first time the lines were hauled; or to take a dead fish into a boat before the line was shot; or to pick up a dead body at sea; or to clean the fish-scales off their fishing-boots before Saturday night; or to meet a cat or cock in going

<sup>1</sup> The same prejudice exists in all the fishing villages along the northern side of the Firth of Forth.



to the fishing ; or to carry a parcel for a friend ; or to go to sea for the first time in the season before blood had been shed ; or for a fisherman's wife to comb her hair after sunset, if her husband's boat was at sea ; or to launch a boat with an ebbing tide ; or to use a boat which had "drowned" a man. On the other hand, it was lucky to dream of a white sea—that is, a sea covered with white-crested waves. It betokened a good catch the next time the boats were out.

There were unlucky hours, days, months, and seasons. It was unlucky to be born between midnight and one in the morning, for such a one saw "feart" things, such as ghosts and apparitions, which others escaped. On Tuesday no one would venture to pare his nails for fear of the witches getting possession and making an improper use of the parings. Wednesday and Saturday were particularly unfortunate for young fisher-girls to enter upon domestic service. It was the peculiarity of Friday that it always went "against the weather of the week"—that is, that on that day a change in the weather was sure to ensue. Work begun on Saturday saw seven Saturdays before it was finished. Work begun on Monday, on the other hand, was speedily accomplished. Sunday was always a lucky day ; but no ship would put out of port on that day before "the blessing was pronounced"—that is, until morning service had ended. All unnecessary work done on Sunday was unlucky. To yoke a horse or clean a byre would bring its own punishment with it. But "an oatmeal Sunday" always made "a barley week"; or in other words, if Sunday was fine, all the rest of the week was bound to be indifferent weather.

So with times and seasons. The first Monday and the first Friday of every quarter were particularly unlucky, and

no one would have ventured to give fire out of his house at those times, for then the witches and fairies held high revel. On Handsel Monday (the first Monday in the year) people always lay in bed till after sunrise, for up to that hour all the powers of evil were abroad. For six weeks before Christmas the house must never be without water, or a mermaid would carry away the one whose duty it was to supply it. The same rule applied to the period between Christmas and New Year. This week was the Sabbath of the year, when all living beings were bound to rest from their labours and give themselves up to enjoyment.

“ Atween Yule an' Yearsmas  
Auld wives shouldna spin,  
An' na hoose should be waterless  
Where maidens lie within.”

It was most important that blood should be shed on Christmas morning. Some of the more old-fashioned people even killed a sheep as a sort of sacrifice. It was proper, too, that every shed and outhouse about the place—the byre, the stable, and the pig-stye—should be cleaned out before evening. And both on Christmas and on New Year morning, something—no matter what—was bound to be brought into the house before anything was taken out of it, or there would be nothing but “putting out” all the ensuing year. With this object peats were often laid outside the night before, to be taken in the first thing in the morning. A custom analogous to the Yule log in England was prevalent in some of the Moray Firth villages about a hundred years ago.

It was usual on the last night of the year to garland the “crook” of the house—the chimney, the couples, and the joists—with seaweed (*Fucus nodosus*) gathered at ebb-tide.

No one would waken another on New Year's morning in case he brought him bad luck. But early rising was none the less a virtue. The one who succeeded in drawing the first water from the well—"the flower of the well"—on that morning, was certain of good luck all the rest of the year. It was unlucky if the first person one saw on New Year's morning was of dark complexion, and lucky if he was fair. A present of fish that day was an omen of good fortune. He who landed the first fish on New Year's Day would have the most luck in his village during the ensuing year. But the first fish that fell off the line when hauling the first shot that morning was always allowed to fall back into the sea. To secure it was certain to bring bad luck.

Few traces of the older customs which so excited the wrath of the Reformed Church as relics of "idolatry"—that is, of Roman Catholicism—remain. But edifying instances of the manner in which they were regarded are to be found in the records of the kirk-sessions of the maritime parishes. On the 15th May 1664 the kirk-session of Speymouth ordained "that none [of the salmon-fishers] cast fire into their nets, and if any should do so, they should be censured as 'charmings.'" On the 16th January 1670 the skippers of Stotfield were cited before the kirk-session of Kinneddar for the idolatrous custom of carrying lighted torches round their boats on New Year's Eve. On the 18th September of the same year intimation was made to the congregation from the pulpit that no person should go "to the superstitious place called the Chappell of Grace"; and so on.

Judged by this standard, it must be admitted that the fisher-people of the coast were a veritable thorn in the flesh of the Kirk. In the inland districts the community was on the

whole amenable to ecclesiastical influence. But the seagoing folk had views of their own, and acted on them in a way which was not always agreeable to their clerical masters. It was difficult to persuade a fisherman that gathering bait or picking up wreck was a transgression of the Sabbath; that "piping, dancing, guising, sporting, and singing of superstitious popish and heathen songs" were unbecoming "Christian gravitie and sobrietie"; that "dressing in the clothes of the opposite sex" by man or woman, for the purpose of "guising," even when it was the case of a young boy who on Hogmanay "roped himself in straw," as was till very recently the practice of the Yule mummers in Shetland, was "a scandalous transgression." The Church got its way for the time, perhaps. The delinquents were always ready to express "unfeigned repentance" for their offences, and even when they could not help themselves, to "make pecuniary satisfaction." But the terrors of the Church were unable to subdue their hereditary independence of character, or to expel the spirit of liberty, mirth, and enjoyment which had been bequeathed to them by their Scandinavian ancestors. Even when expiating their offences at the kirk door in sackcloth and ashes, they felt like the hero of the old ballad—

"There's nae repentance in my heart—  
The fiddle's in my aims!"

The superstitions and peculiar customs of the Moray Firth fishermen are perhaps more curious than useful. Their weather-lore, again, embodying as it does the experience of generations of keen-eyed observers, is both the one and the other.

The weather in spring was always carefully noted. If the last ten days of February and the first ten days of March were fine, a dry season might be expected. If March came in

"like an adder's head, it would go out like a peacock's tail."

Again—

"As mony mists in March ye see,  
As mony frosts in May will be."

It was as important to observe the day on which a storm broke out as the quarter from which it came. If a storm began on Monday, it would last throughout the week. If there was a fair day at all, it would be Friday. A storm rising on Saturday was called a "blatter," and would "never see Monday morning." Rain coming from the south or south-east was called a "dreepie": the wind generally veered to the west or north-west, and seldom failed to blow a strong breeze.

From sun and moon, from the shape of the clouds, from the appearance of meteors and other celestial phenomena, important inferences might be drawn. When the sun had a glaring colour at rising, a breeze was known to be approaching. If it had a ring around it, a change of weather was indicated; but it took longer to come than that presaged by a similar circle around the moon. Such a lunar ring had different local names. It was called a "broch" (brooch), a "moon-bow," "the ring," "the rim," or "the wheel," and the old rhyme ran:—

"The brighter the wheel is,  
The sooner the breeze is;  
The dimmer the wheel is,  
The farrer the breeze is."

An opening in the circle showed the quarter from which the breeze would blow.

A mock-sun was called a "falcon" or "sun-dog," and according to its position portended fair or foul weather.

"A falcon before,  
The gale is ower;  
A falcon behind,  
The gale ye shall find."

The waxing and waning moons were powerful influences for good or for evil. If the new moon came in on a Saturday during harvest, very bad weather might be anticipated. One such moon, it was said, was enough in seven years. But, as a rule, the new moon brought as good luck as the waning moon brought evil. If a chimney or any piece of clothing went on fire during the waxing moon, it was an augury of riches; if during a waning moon, a death in the household was not far off. No animal was ever killed for family use during a waning moon. Full moon was the proper time for all such work. If a pig was killed in "the first of the moon," the fat would all melt away in the cooking. Eggs should always be set either at full moon or before it, and never before six o'clock in the evening. Meteors or falling stars were a sign of bad weather, and the wind always blew in the direction to which they moved. The "dancers" (*aurora borealis*) generally prognosticated stormy weather, except when towards the north and in frost. Cumulus clouds were known as "toors" (towers). The point of the horizon from which they were seen to rise indicated the point from which the wind would blow. Cirrus clouds went by the name of "cat's hair" or "goat's hair," and always meant breezy weather. It is curious to find a corruption of the name which the Mediterranean sailor gives to St Elmo's fire in use among the Moray Firth fishermen. There can be no doubt, however, that "corbie's aunt" or "covenanter," applied to the phenomenon, is none other than the "corpo santo" of the Maltese sailors.

A few miles east of the town of Nairn there existed till almost eighty years ago a little fishing village called Mavistoun. The Bæotian simplicity of its inhabitants is to this day a byword. "The fisher-gouks of Mavistoun" is a line that occurs in a poem by a now forgotten local bard. If a tithe

of the stories still current among the Nairn fishermen about them have any foundation in fact, they were the most superstitious, the most ignorant, and the laziest of their kind. At the trial of the famous witches of Auldearn one of the women confessed that whenever they wanted fish they had only to go to Mavistoun and repeat the following incantation,—

“ The fishers are gane to the sea,  
And they'll bring hame fish to me ;  
They'll bring hame intil the boat,  
But they'll get nane but o' the smaller sort,”—

to get from the terrified fishermen as many as they wanted. Once it is said a fisherman found a horse-shoe on the beach. It was the first that had ever been seen in Mavistoun, and all the wise men in the little community gathered together to examine it. One of them at last hazarded the opinion that it was a bit of the moon—in fact, a new moon. This view was promptly contradicted by the man who, being the oldest, was regarded as the wisest among them. “A moon it was,” he believed ; “but it could not be a new moon, otherwise it would be up in the sky. For himself, he had often wondered what became of the old moons. This settled it. The old moons fell to the earth, and this was one of them.”

On another occasion a cow—an animal all but unknown among fishing communities—found its way to Mavistoun. The day was hot, and, in search of a cool place, it entered one of the huts. A fisherman was at work within mending his lines. Seeing the creature had cloven hoofs, horns, and a tail, the poor man thought he was in presence of the arch enemy of mankind himself, and immediately sprang upon the rafters and made his escape through the roof. Soon after this another cow strayed into the village. It was resolved to capture it. But how to secure an animal which few of

them had ever seen before was the problem. At last one of them, pointing to its tail, observed that nature itself had shown them how to bind it. So the cow was immediately tethered by that appendage.

Their infallible barometer was the rowan-tree of the village. On awakening in the morning the skipper would ask the youngest of his crew, "Boy, hoo's the roddan?" If the answer was, "The roddan's noddin'"—that is, that a light breeze was agitating its branches—he would at once give orders to prepare for going to sea. But if the reply was, "The roddan's doddin'"—that is, jogging from side to side, indicating that a strong wind was blowing—no power on earth would prevail on him to fly in the face of Providence and face the dangers of the deep. These stories, which in the neighbourhood are still firmly believed, will give an idea of the reputation acquired by the famous "fishers of Mavistoun."

Enough has probably now been said to show how thoroughly old Moray—the Moray that expired hardly a hundred years ago—differed from the Moray of the present day.

If from a purely picturesque and sentimental point of view there is much to regret in the disappearance of the past, there is surely more ample cause for rejoicing in the appearance of the present. Whatever else can be said of it, it cannot be alleged that Moray has lagged behind in the improvement of its principal—one feels almost inclined to say its only—local industry. Shrewd, keen-witted, possessing in an exceptional degree the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum*, the extraordinary advance that its inhabitants have made in agriculture, especially within the last half-century, is surely a good augury of what may be expected from them in the future.

The main obstacle to the county's ever attaining a higher measure of prosperity than that which it now possesses,



appears to be its indifference to employing other methods of enrichment than those of which its forefathers made use. *Stare super antiquas vias* is a good rule in theory, and generally in practice. Yet one is inclined to think that "the narrow paths in which our fathers trod" might in these latter days be exchanged with advantage for the broader roads of modern life, and that a more extended knowledge would lead to a wider appreciation of the benefits of our everyday extending civilisation. If Moray could introduce new industries, it would undoubtedly reap an equivalent profit. Few counties in Scotland are more amply endowed by nature.

Within its more circumscribed limits Nairnshire, and especially the town of Nairn, has shown a greater inclination to march with the times. They have ventured more — some people may even think they have ventured too much. But with communities, as with individuals, the rule of "Never venture never win" holds good. Energy and enlightenment are the only factors of success.

VII.

DISTINGUISHED MEN OF MORAY  
AND NAIRN



## VII.

### DISTINGUISHED MEN OF MORAY AND NAIRN.

FLORENCE WILSON — LACHLAN SHAW — ISAAC FORSYTH — WILLIAM  
LESLIE — JAMES GRANT — PROVOST GRANT — SIR THOMAS DICK  
LAUDER — COSMO INNES — CHARLES ST JOHN — DR GEORGE GORDON  
— WILLIAM HAY — WILLIAM MARSHALL — ROUALEYN GEORGE GOR-  
DON CUMMING — WILLIAM GORDON CUMMING — CONSTANCE FRED-  
ERICA GORDON CUMMING — JAMES AUGUSTUS GRANT — SIR GEORGE  
BROWN.

FEW names of distinction in literature, science, or art, illustrate the earlier annals of the district. So long as Roman Catholicism was predominant, the Cathedral of Elgin was, as we have seen, the "Lantern of the North," the vivifying centre of culture and intelligence for the whole of the kingdom north and west of Aberdeen. But from the time of its abolition till the commencement of the present century, the records of both Moray and Nairn are exceptionally barren in persons who have risen above mediocrity either intellectually or socially. The genius of the people seems to have run in more material and practical channels.

The one writer of eminence that Morayshire has produced is the medieval scholar FLORENTIUS VOLUSENUS, or, to give him what is supposed to have been his real name, FLORENCE

WILSON. And even his is a reputation which never extended much beyond the cultured and scholastic circles of his own time. It may be doubted if one in a thousand of his fellow-countrymen of the present day has read a line of his works, or even heard his name. Yet the mere list of those with whom he is known to have been in relations either of friendship or of business, points to an eminence which was no more to be obtained without merit three centuries ago than it is in our own day. He was the *protégé* of no less than four Cardinals of different nations—Wolsey of England, Lorraine and Du Bellay of France, and Sadoletto of Italy. He was the confidential correspondent of Thomas Cromwell, afterwards Earl of Essex. Boece, Vaus, Gavin Dunbar, and John Bellenden had the highest opinion of him, and took an interest in his fortunes. Stephen Gardiner, the celebrated Bishop of Winchester; Fisher, Bishop of Rochester; Fox, Bishop of Hereford; and William Pigot, Henry VIII.'s ambassador, were amongst the number of his friends. Bartholomew Anneau, Principal of Trinity College, Lyons, went out of his way to eulogise his virtues and his learning to his countryman, the Regent Arran. Conrad Gesner, the "Pliny of Germany," had the same opinion of his merits. George Buchanan, who knew him intimately, loved him as a brother, and lamented his untimely death in an epitaph as pathetic as it is elegant:—

" Hic musis, Volusene, jaces carissime, ripam  
Ad Rhodani—terra quam procul a patria !  
Hoc meruit virtus tua, tellus quæ foret altrix  
Virtutum, ut cineres conderet illa tuos."

As it is, his fame rests not on his philosophical works, on which probably he set the greatest store, but on his 'Dialogus de Animi Tranquillitate'—a book which seems to have been the recreation of his "leisurable hours," and whose attractions

for us rest rather on its easy style, its calm philosophy, its tender and loving sympathy for weak and erring humanity, and its just observations of men and manners and things, than on its elegant Latinity and its wide learning.

In 1775, more than two hundred years after the death of Florence Wilson, the bibliography of the district received its next important contribution by the publication of LACHLAN SHAW's 'History of the Province of Moray.' Though not himself a native of Moray, its author had many qualifications for becoming its historian. He was born close to its borders; almost the whole of his long life had been spent within it; while his position as a parish minister, first in Nairnshire and afterwards in Elginshire, had brought him in contact with all classes of the community in both counties. He was the son of Donald Shaw, a respectable farmer at Rothiemurchus in the county of Inverness, who claimed to be a descendant of the old family of the same name who in the thirteenth century settled on the lands of Rothiemurchus as tenants of the bishops of Moray, and ultimately became the proprietors of the estate. Born probably in 1686, he received the rudiments of his education at Ruthven in Badenoch, then the only school of any importance on the whole course of the river Spey. In 1712 he was parish schoolmaster at Abernethy, and in 1716, after having completed his theological studies at the University of Edinburgh, he became minister of the parish of Kingussie. From Kingussie he was, in 1719, transferred to Cawdor, and from thence, in 1734, to Elgin, where he spent the remaining forty years of his life. In 1774 he resigned his charge, and died on 23d February 1777, in the ninety-first year of his age and in the sixty-first year of his ministry.

Defective though it is, in many respects, Shaw's 'History

of the Province' is still our best authority on the subject. The faults of the work are not so much those of the author, whose zeal and diligence are beyond all praise, and who had qualified himself for the task by many years of personal exploration through the district, and of patient study of local records, as of the imperfect state of historical and archaeological science in his day. No book, however, has suffered so much at the hands of incompetent editors. The second edition, which was published in 1827 by John Grant, bookseller in Elgin, is so disfigured by extraneous additions and intolerant bigotry that the original text cannot be distinguished; while the editor of its third and last edition, published in Glasgow in 1882, has rendered the confusion which prevails as to the early history of the province more confounded by adding an undigested mass of lengthy notes, intended to correct the errors of the original, compiled from the works of authors amongst whom Richard of Cirencester holds a distinguished place.

About the commencement of the present century the dormant energies of the people seem to have quickened into life; and from that time forward both counties have contributed their own share of persons who have achieved, if not distinction, at least a meritorious position in all the varied spheres of human activity.

It was in Elgin that the symptoms of reviving energy first became apparent. Within the old cathedral city there was a little knot of clever, pushing, far-sighted men, who, though seemingly bent on nothing more than advancing their own interests, or indulging their own individual tastes and proclivities, were really by their enlightened energy and example doing the whole of the community an incomparable service. Though most of them never attained to

more than a local reputation, they were in reality the pioneers of returning progress. Few who know anything of the history of the district will refuse to such men as ISAAC FORSYTH, bookseller and farmer, the originator of the first local circulating library, to JAMES GRANT, the founder of the first local newspaper, to PROVOST GRANT, the promoter of the first local railway, to WILLIAM LESLIE, the historian of local agriculture, and to their little band of fellow-workers, the credit due to their exertions and example. They had much to contend with. They had to fight against ignorance, prejudice, and inveterate obstinacy. They had to teach their countrymen the latter-day gospel of hard work, patriotic pride, and self-reliance.

Scarcely any of them owed anything to fortune. Isaac Forsyth, the son of a small merchant in Elgin, had no education beyond what he received at the "sang-schule" of the burgh. James Grant's father was the driver of the mail-coach between Banff and Elgin, and was even still more badly off in the matter of early instruction. Provost Grant was the son of a small farmer. The only one who had any pretensions to social position, or enjoyed any of the advantages which social position confers, was William Leslie, who was the son of the proprietor of the estate of Balnakeith, near Forres, and had at least the benefit of a university education.

Isaac Forsyth's career, though perhaps the least interesting, was certainly not the least useful, of the four. He was born in 1768, and he died in 1859.<sup>1</sup> He was one of the founders, and for long the secretary, of the Morayshire Farmers' Club; he helped largely to induce the Government to assume the care of the ruins of the cathedral; and the local works which

<sup>1</sup> His elder brother, Joseph, is a much more widely known person. His imprisonment at Valenciennes, and his 'Remarks during a Tour in Italy,' at one time attracted considerable attention.



from time to time he published, and which to this day, except as regards their historical information, are still accepted as authorities, did much to attract public attention to a district of Scotland which till then was practically unknown. Two of these books still locally bear his name. The one, a 'Survey of the Province of Moray, Historical, Geographical, and Political,' published in 1798, is called "Muckle Isaac"; the other, an 'Account of the Antiquities, Modern Buildings, and Natural Curiosities of the Province of Moray, worthy of the attention of the Tourist, with an Itinerary of the Province,' of which the first edition appeared in 1813, and the second, "adjusted to the passing time," was published in 1823, is, from its smaller size, known as "Little Isaac."

The joint author of the former and the sole author of the latter work was the Rev. William Leslie, minister of St Andrews-Lhanbryde, a man whose talents and eccentricities have kept his name alive to the present day. An original both in mind and manners, stories about him are innumerable. It is said that in the original MS. of "Little Isaac" he hazarded the bold suggestion that St Paul the apostle might have been the cause of the introduction of Christianity into Moray. No such statement, however, occurs in any of the published copies of the book.

Leslie's great work, his 'General View of the Agriculture of the Counties of Nairn and Moray, with Observations on the Means of their Improvement, drawn up for the consideration of the Board of Agriculture and internal Improvement,' which was published in 1813, is by far the best description we possess of the agricultural condition of the district, and the habits and customs of the peasantry, at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the present century.

But of all his literary productions the most characteristic, as they are also the most amusing, are the certificates which, in the course of his ministerial duties, or out of the sheer benevolence of his heart, he from time to time composed. Very many of these exist, and are to be found among the treasures of collectors of local literary curiosities. We must confine ourselves to two examples. The one is a beggar's "token":—

To all his Majesty's loving subjects who can feel for a fellow-sinner in distress, I beg to certify that the bearer, W—— J——, is the son of my old Bellman, a man well known in the neighbourhood for his honest poverty and excessive sloth. The son has inherited a full share of his father's poverty and a double portion of his improvidence. I cannot say that the bearer has many active virtues to boast of; but he is not altogether unmindful of Scriptural injunctions, having striven, and with no small success, to replenish the earth, though he has done but little to subdue the same. It was his misfortune to lose his cow lately, from too little care and too much bere caff [chaff]; and that walking skeleton which he had used to call his *horse* has ceased to hear the oppressor's voice or dread the tyrant's *load*. The poor man has now no means of repairing his loss but the skins of the defunct and the generosity of a benevolent public, whom he expects to be stimulated to great liberality by this testimonial from theirs, with respect, &c.,

WILL. LESLIE.

DARKLANDS, 29th Dec. 1829.

The other is to a woman, who was a competitor for a prize given by the Duke of Gordon to the domestic servant who had remained longest in one situation:—

LHANBRYD GLEBE, Aug. 31st, 1836.

By this writing I certify and testify that K—— B—— came into my family and service at the term of Whitsunday Eighteen hundred and fifteen, and without change has continued to the date hereof: being a useful canny servant at all work about the cows,

the dairy, the sick nurse, the harvest—hay and corn—the services of the parlour and bedchambers, and of late years mainly the cook, that in my regards she merits any boon that our club has to bestow, having in 1815, in her teens, been a comely tight lass, tho' now fallen into the sere, and but little seductive, though a little more self-conceited now than she was then—as much perhaps a good quality, when not in excess, as a fault.

WILL. LESLIE.

This excellent and eccentric man, who had been fifty years the minister of his parish, and who preached regularly and never had an assistant till towards the end of his ninetieth year, died in 1839, aged nearly ninety-two.

James Grant, the historian of the newspaper press, and the founder of the first newspaper in the north of Scotland between Aberdeen and Inverness, was born in the last years of the eighteenth century. His father, who died from the result of a driving accident when James was quite a boy, left a family of four sons and one daughter. The poor widow had a severe struggle to maintain so large a flock. Anything except the merest elementary instruction for her children was beyond her means. But there was "good grit" in the lads; and one after another, when he had come to reasonable age, set about educating himself. James, as soon as he was fit to do anything for himself, was apprenticed to a baker. But all his spare hours were spent in reading. John, the second son, the author of the inimitable "Penny Wedding," followed in his brother's footsteps. He taught himself literary composition; he taught himself drawing—the plates in the "Penny Wedding," though rough in execution, are brimful of character; he was keenly ambitious; he ultimately succeeded in establishing a bookseller's and publisher's business in London; and if death had not checked his career, he might have equalled, and perhaps outstripped, the success of his elder brother.

But James, the first-born, was destined to be the pride and glory of the family. He was little more than a lad, working at his trade of baker, when, encouraged by the acceptance of some articles he had written for the 'Statesman,' a London evening paper, and the 'Imperial Magazine,' a respectable London monthly, it occurred to him to start a newspaper in conjunction with his brother John. John was to attend to its business affairs; James was to be its editor. The idea seemed sheer midsummer madness. There were already two papers in the North of Scotland—the 'Aberdeen Journal,' founded in 1746, and the 'Inverness Courier,' founded in 1817—and these were ample to supply the very meagre needs of the district. No one, either in Moray or Nairn, wanted anything more. And the obstacles to success were numerous. Elgin was an obscure little town of only 5000 inhabitants, much more curious about its own affairs and those of its neighbours than of the concerns of the nation; the stamp duty was sevenpence. More fatal than either of these considerations was the fact that neither James nor John had a penny of capital. But the two pushing brothers managed to find some one who had; and in the year 1827 the 'Elgin Courier' was started. His sister, the youngest of the family, who assisted James in his bakery business in the little shop at the head of Lossie Wynd, used to tell in after-years how she sold her brother's loaves and papers over the same counter. The paper was not at first the success the brothers anticipated. Three years after its establishment the circulation was only 216. In another three years its profits had risen to between £400 and £500 a-year. But even this rate of progress was not sufficient to make it a paying concern; and in 1833 James Grant severed his connection with it, and set off to London to seek his fortune in literature, which had now become the

ruling passion of his life. His departure accelerated the ruin of the 'Courier.' In 1834 it finally collapsed. The presses, types, &c., were bought by one person, the copyright by another.

Out of the ashes of the 'Elgin Courier' sprang the 'Elgin Courant,' which was almost immediately started by the purchaser of its stock-in-trade. And this respectable paper, which had adopted its name and its principles from the 'Edinburgh Courant,' then the most influential newspaper in Scotland, continued to be the sole organ of public opinion in Elgin till 1845, when another paper appeared under the title of the 'Elgin and Morayshire Courier.' The latter carried on a somewhat precarious existence till 1874, when it was purchased by Mr James Black, the then proprietor of the 'Courant,' and the two were amalgamated under the name of the 'Elgin Courant and Courier.' In 1892 it was sold by Mr Black to its present proprietors. As the only exponent of Radical principles within the two counties, it enjoys a very considerable circulation. Its almost immediate success was the means of attracting other competitors into the journalistic field. In 1855 the 'Elgin and Morayshire Advertiser' was started. But it had never much root, and in 1870 or 1871 it withered away. In 1880 the 'Moray and Nairn Express,' an offshoot of the 'Aberdeen Journal,' was founded to propagate Conservative principles in the district. Its circulation has gone up by leaps and bounds, till it is now larger than any other weekly paper in the county. Of late it has adopted the name of 'The Northern Scot' as a sub-title, and probably before long the old local name will be merged in the more ambitious appellation. The only other newspaper in Elginshire is the 'Forres Gazette,' founded in 1817 by John Miller, and now the property of and conducted by his son, Mr James D. Miller.

The first newspaper started in Nairnshire was the 'Mirror,

which appeared in 1841. It is said to have received its name from the happy inspiration of Mr Falconer, the sheriff-substitute of the county, who hit upon it when gazing on his own shrewd kindly face in a looking-glass one morning when shaving. It was merely a monthly paper at first, but latterly it was issued fortnightly. In 1853 it met its first and only rival in the shape of the 'Nairnshire Telegraph.' The following year both papers were combined under one management. Its present editor and proprietor is Mr George Bain, the author of a 'History of Nairnshire'—one of the best county histories extant. The only other paper in Nairnshire is a little weekly sheet, called the 'St Ninian Press,' established in 1892 by Mr John Fraser, bookseller, Nairn.

James Grant's subsequent career in London must be sketched in very few words. His first appointment was on the parliamentary staff of the 'Morning Chronicle.' But though it brought him five guineas a-week, his work was distasteful to him; and accordingly in 1835 he left it. Next year he obtained something more to his liking, in the editorship of the 'Monthly Magazine,' a periodical of large circulation and high literary repute, which had been founded about a quarter of a century before by Sir Richard Phillips. Magazine work had always had attractions for him. Even when in Elgin, in the midst of his laborious duties on the 'Courier,' he had found time to publish the 'Elgin Annual' and the 'Elgin Literary Magazine.' Every line of the first, except a few poems contributed by friends, and almost every line of the second, was written by himself. His powers of production seemed limited only by the exigencies of food and sleep. His editorship of the 'Monthly' brought him, for the first time, into connection with a young writer who was at that time known, if he could be said to be known at all, under the *nom de plume* of "Boz." "Boz" had contributed some sketches of London

street life to the magazine before it had come into Grant's management; and the new editor thought them very good. But he had not the slightest idea who he was. With some difficulty he discovered that his name was Charles Dickens; that he lived in Furnival's Inn; and that he was a parliamentary reporter on the staff of the very paper he had so recently quitted. He wrote to him, asking on what terms he would continue his contributions to the magazine. The young man replied to the effect that he was very busy writing a serial for Messrs Chapman & Hall—it turned out to be the 'Pickwick Papers'; that this work occupied the most of the time he could spare from his duties as a parliamentary reporter; and that if he was to continue his sketches, he could only do so at the rate of £8, 8s. a sheet. This was only half a guinea a page, but it was more than Grant could induce the proprietor of the magazine to give. In less than six months after this, "Boz" was able to command a hundred guineas a sheet from the proprietors of any of the leading periodicals of the day.

After he had been for a considerable time editor of the 'Monthly,' Grant found himself in a position to make a venture on his own account. He purchased from Captain Marryat the 'Metropolitan Magazine,' a periodical which had been started by Thomas Campbell and Tom Moore, and to which he had been for some time a contributor. It was a fairly successful speculation. When he disposed of it some years later, he was able to sell it for the same price as he had given for it. Once more he betook himself to newspaper work. There was then a daily metropolitan paper, called the 'Morning Advertiser,' which had been started in 1794 as the organ of the licensed victuallers of London, and was managed by a committee of the body. The paper had for some time been going back, and it was deemed necessary by the

managing committee that an effort should be made to redeem its position. In October 1850 it was resolved to double the size of the paper—a step which involved an additional expenditure of £10,000 a-year—and to appoint a new editor. Grant was chosen. The result abundantly justified this decision. In four years the circulation went up from 5000 to 8000, and the yearly profits from £6000 to £12,000. More gratifying still was the fact that the paper, which had hitherto circulated only amongst public-houses and luncheon bars, was now to be found on the reading-room tables of almost every West End club in London.

At first he seems to have rejoiced in his freedom from the trammels of editorial harness. But he had worn it so long that he soon began to feel uncomfortable without it. Regular methodical work had become the very essence of his existence. He felt he could not live without it. Accordingly, "chiefly to please himself," and, in some degree, to propagate his own religious opinions, he established a weekly religious paper, which he called the 'Christian Standard.' But after a time he gave it up. Yet to the end of his days he continued his connection with journalism by contributing a weekly letter to the 'Dumfries Standard,' and another to a local paper in Wales. He died in London in 1879, at the age of seventy-four.

Few men had lived a more laborious life. Heavy and exacting as were the duties of his profession, they very far from exhausted his energies. All his days, in addition to his contributions to periodical literature, he had gone on writing books. Novels, sketches, recollections more or less biographical, religious works, flowed, one after another, from his almost too facile pen. Some were large, some were small; some were good, some were indifferent; some represented a certain amount of research, others were dashed



off *currente calamo*. Their tale amounts to over sixty; they constitute almost a small library of themselves. Of all his works, his 'History of the Newspaper Press, its Origin, Progress, and present Position,' of which the first two volumes were published in 1871, and the third and concluding volume in 1872, will probably be longest remembered. It is a contribution to the literature of the subject by a fair and open-minded expert, and contains many personal touches of great interest.

If to one James Grant the district owed its first newspaper, to another it owed its first railway. This was James Grant, solicitor and banker (1801-1872), who from 1848 to 1863 was Provost of Elgin, and who for his energy, his public spirit, and the success which, ultimately at least, attended all his enterprises, was known by the sobriquet of "the Provost of Scotland." In conjunction with his brother John he founded in 1840 the Glen Grant Distillery at Rothes, an establishment which has now an output of 290,000 gallons a-year. But it was his work in connection with railway enterprise which earned for him the regard of his fellow-citizens. To this he devoted the best years and the best energies of his life; and before his efforts were crowned with success he had many a hard battle to fight.

The relations of the municipality of Elgin towards the harbour of Lossiemouth have been already referred to. On the 25th November 1844, according to its minutes, a communication was received by the town council "from Mr James Grant, banker, for forming a railway from Stotfield (Lossiemouth) harbour to Elgin, and from Elgin to Rothes." The project was favourably received. An Act of incorporation for the Morayshire Railway, dated 16th July 1846, was obtained; and on 10th August 1852 its first portion—from Lossiemouth to Elgin, a distance of five and a half miles—was

opened for public traffic. The second Act of the Morayshire Railway, which was intended to open up the district of Rothes, Craigellachie, and Strathspey, was procured in 1856. About the same time another company stepped into the field. This was the Inverness and Aberdeen Junction Railway. There was already a line between Aberdeen and Keith—the Great North of Scotland—and another between Nairn and Inverness—the Inverness and Nairn Railway. The new company proposed to occupy the still unoccupied space between Keith and Nairn, and thus to complete the line between Aberdeen and Inverness. As communication would be thus provided between Elgin and Orton, there was no further necessity for the Morayshire Railway constructing a second line between these two places. The Morayshire Railway accordingly decided to limit its exertions to the construction of a line between Orton and Rothes—a distance of three and a half miles. On the 23d August 1858 this line was opened for public traffic, and on the same day communication was established between Elgin and Orton by the opening of the Inverness and Aberdeen Junction Railway. The original design of the Morayshire Railway was thus effected.

But as, through the instrumentality of the Inverness and Aberdeen Junction Railway, the Morayshire Railway had been saved the expense of the construction of its Elgin and Orton section, it felt it was justified in a further extension of its scheme. It accordingly proceeded with the construction of a line from Rothes to Dandaleith—a distance of three miles. An important step had thus been taken towards the attainment of what had been from the first its ultimate object—the “tapping” of the great Highland district of Strathspey. Very soon, however, disputes began to arise between the Morayshire Railway and the Inverness and Aberdeen Junction Railway. Before long these became so acute that the Moray-

shire Railway conceived it had no option but to cut itself entirely adrift from a line which had now become an active opponent. In 1860 it accordingly applied to Parliament for powers to construct a direct line from Elgin to Rothes, and thus to connect its two sections. The Inverness and Aberdeen Junction Railway naturally objected to this, and a furious fight began. It was then that Provost Grant's real work commenced. He threw himself heart and soul into the struggle. Any one watching him would have thought it was a personal matter he was battling for. And so it was in a way. For the Morayshire Railway was the child of his own brain, and its interests concerned him as much as if he had been its sole proprietor. And when he returned to Elgin after having won the victory, he was accorded a reception such as had been bestowed on no public man within the memory of any one then living. This, the third section of the Morayshire Railway, was constructed with great rapidity, and was opened for public traffic little more than a year after it had obtained its Act.

The year 1861 was one of great energy in the promotion of railways in the North. It gave birth to the Highland Railway, a line originally intended only to connect Perth with Forres. And it also saw the passing of an Act promoted by the Great North, for the construction of what was called the Strathspey Railway, whose object was the establishment of direct communication between Dufftown and Abernethy. Neither of these trenchered directly on the province of the Morayshire Railway. On the contrary, the latter was actually extending the Morayshire Railway's original scheme of opening up the Strathspey Highlands. It was plain that if the Morayshire and the Strathspey Railways could come to terms, there was a much better chance of the idea being carried out than if each had contented itself with working

on its own account. An arrangement was speedily arrived at ; and in 1861 the Morayshire Railway, on the suggestion of its indefatigable founder, applied to and readily obtained from Parliament the necessary authority to bridge the river Spey at Craigellachie, and thus to effect a connection there with the Strathspey Railway. The great viaduct of 51 chains which it proceeded to erect cost between £12,000 and £13,000. Its last rivet was clinched on the 1st June 1863 ; and on the 1st July of the same year the Craigellachie Junction Railway, as it was called, was opened for public traffic. On the same day the Great North of Scotland Railway, in connection with the Keith and Dufftown and Strathspey Railways, under the parliamentary agreement between all the companies, commenced to work the whole system of the Morayshire railways. This arrangement continued till the 30th September 1880, when the Morayshire Railway was finally merged in the Great North of Scotland Company.

The total capital authorised by Parliament for the construction of its various sections amounted to £186,133. The total length of its lines was twenty-two miles. Mr Grant, who had been its secretary and law agent from its inception, was in 1855 appointed its chairman, and retained that position for seventeen years, till his death in 1872.

The impulse thus given to progress, intellectual, material, and social, by the four men whose careers we have now sketched, soon extended beyond their immediate spheres. Any one who has the patience to peruse the minute-book of the Town Council of Elgin will readily perceive the rapidity with which it ramified into the *quicquid agunt homines* of the Roman poet. A spirit of inquisitive energy had been generated which was never thereafter to be quenched. From this time Moray and Nairn have been able to hold their own with other districts in Scotland.

It is impossible, with the limited space at our disposal, to signalise all those who, profiting by this example, proceeded "to hand on the lamp of life." We must content ourselves with briefly mentioning those who have most materially added to the lustre of the district.

Many of them were not even natives of Moray, but merely connected with it by ties of affinity, office, or inclination.

Such, for example, was Sir THOMAS DICK LAUDER (1784-1848), who wrote the history of the Morayshire Floods of 1829 — one of the most graphic, and at the same time elaborate, descriptions of such catastrophes in literature. He was an East Lothian man, the son of Sir Andrew Lauder, Bart. of Fountainhall, and a descendant of the famous Scotch judge Lord Fountainhall, equally famous for his 'Decisions' and his 'Historical Observes.' But he had married the daughter and heiress of George Cumin, the proprietor of Relugas, an estate near Forres, at the junction of the Devon and the Findhorn, "one of the most beautiful spots in Scotland." And here, after retiring from the army, he lived till 1831, when he removed to another of his family seats, the Grange House, near Edinburgh. Although a man of great mental and bodily activity, the quiet life of a country gentleman seems to have suited him better than that of a soldier. At any rate it was at Relugas that he developed all those varied accomplishments which led Lord Cockburn to say of him that he could have made his way in the world "as a player, a ballad-singer, a street fiddler, a geologist, a civil engineer, or a surveyor, and easily and eminently as an artist or a layer-out of ground."

It was, however, his literary talent which in the end gained him his greatest distinction. His first production was a paper on "The Parallel Roads of Glen Roy," read before the Royal Society of Edinburgh. A sketch which he contributed to

'Maga,' of "Simon Roy, gardener at Dunphail," had the honour of being mistaken for one of Sir Walter Scott's. And his historical romances, 'The Wolfe of Badenoch' and 'Lochandhu,' were distinctly framed on the model of the work of the Great Magician, whose friend he was, and for whom he had, like most other people, the profoundest admiration. Both these books are very clever, very bright, very vigorous, and rich in local colouring, and as such deservedly find many readers at the present day. Unfortunately, however, their "history" is hardly to be relied on; and as literary compositions they are undoubtedly inferior to his two later works, 'The Morayshire Floods' and 'Scottish Rivers,' which are masterpieces of picturesque description and narrative.

Another equally warm friend to Moray, and equally unconnected with it by birth, was COSMO INNES, who was its sheriff from 1840 till 1852. Morayshire was the country of his forefathers. His father was a scion of the house of Innes of Innes,—one of the oldest families in the district,—and was at one time proprietor of the estate of Leuchars, near Elgin. But he sold it to the Earl of Fife, and took a seventy-six years' lease of the estate of Durris on Deeside from the Earl of Peterborough. In this estate he embarked all his means, building a mansion-house and otherwise improving it. But on the death of Lord Peterborough, the Duke of Gordon, as next heir of entail, brought an action of reduction of the lease. A decision adverse to the tenant ensued; and in 1824 Mr Innes was ejected from a place to which he was much attached, on which he had spent his whole fortune, and which he fondly hoped was to be the home of himself and his successors for many a generation.

It was at Durris that, on the 9th September 1798, the

future Sheriff of Moray and Nairn was born, the youngest but one of a family of sixteen children.

It is, however, with his connection with the two counties of Moray and Nairn that we are more immediately concerned. His marriage to Miss Rose of Kilravock in 1826 had confirmed him in his hereditary liking for the district. His appointment to the sheriffship put the crowning touch on this. "Of all his appointments," says his daughter, Mrs Hill Burton, in her Memoir of her father, "this was the one which caused him most pleasure."

His best talents were always at the service of his beloved Moray. No man did more to illustrate its history, or to give it the prominence which it merited, but which, till he took its records in hand, it had never adequately received. In his introduction to the 'Registrum Moraviense,' which he edited for the Bannatyne Club, he for the first time told, as it deserved to be told, the history of the bishopric and the constitution of its *collegium*. In his 'Legal Antiquities' he for the first time explained in language that was intelligible, and with an authority which was undoubted, the nature of its early rulers, its maormors, its toshachs, and its thanes. In the Cawdor and Kilravock books which he edited for the Spalding Club he related the story of two of its principal families; and in his 'Sketches of Early Scotch History' he amused himself and his readers by describing the old home-life of the country gentry in both the one county and the other. With the exception of his private letters, there are hardly any of his writings so genial, so picturesque, so thoroughly charming, as his descriptions of the Campbells of Cawdor and the Roses of Kilravock.

It is to be regretted that his correspondence has never been published. His letters are admirable, because they reflect the man. They disclose his untiring industry, his

keen intelligence, his unflinching resolve never to take a thing on trust, but to probe every matter to the core ; his worries and his pleasures, his intense kind-heartedness, his wide capacity for friendship, his sunny philosophy, his deep religious spirit. "Your philosophy," he writes to his friend Captain Dunbar-Dunbar of Sea Park and Glen of Rothies,<sup>1</sup> "I approve, but find it rather hard to practise. I suppose most men do. But there are minds more sunny than others, just as one man's digestion is better than another's. At any rate, I am not inclined to think a man has little feeling because he is not always in the dumps." "I left a jolly party at 11 last night," he says in another letter to the same correspondent, "in the middle of Lancashire (where I sat beside Mrs Gaskell, the writer of the remarkable Lancashire books), and I was in court here at 11 this morning, and now we are in the dust and clang and shuffling of witnesses and bullying of counsel of a trashy jury trial. It isn't pleasant just now, but I know that, like the succession of seasons, like the alternation of night and day, it is good and needful for man's health—sometimes work, sometimes play." "I notice what you say about money," he remarks in another, "and the loss of it, with great interest. If you have plenty and never bother your head with it, you have more than the philosopher's stone could give. You defend yourself so well that you can afford to forgive the impertinence (if I really committed it) of insinuating that you were too much taken up with that 'secret curse.' Alas! the man who throws love of mammon in another's teeth is always a poor

<sup>1</sup> The well-known writer of 'Social Life in former Days, chiefly in the Province of Moray,' of which the first series was published in 1865 and the second in 1866; and of 'Documents relating to the Province of Moray,' published in 1895, which is a sequel to his two preceding works. All these books are of great value to the student of local and social history.



devil who has no mammon to love." "I am horribly overworked still," he writes in January 1867. "Nonsense! I like work, and never am so well as when working hard. Black thoughts will cross the sky at times, but in general I make fair weather well enough. I have no business to write to my friends when the blue devils have a grip of me." "My philosophy is never to get old, and it holds good *to a certain point!*"

In another letter to the same friend he gives his impressions of London and Paris: "I hope I may find you in town about the end of this month. You will come back learned in London—a learning I have never got. It is the worst place for any sustained and consistent work I ever tried. Nothing but necessity of business—an appeal case to fight, or a volume of Acts of Parliament to edit, in the Tower (of old) and Museum and Chapter House and State Paper Office—ever kept me steadily and soberly occupied in London. Paris is much better. There are more men (and women) to sympathise with any intelligent study, and the evening talk whets the appetite for a new dish of work in the morning." His love of the country, especially of Moray, and his fondness for sport, come up again and again in these charming and characteristic letters. "You fellows living always in the country," he says, writing from Ullapool, where he is spending his autumn vacation, "have no idea how this wild free life delights a man shut up in a town for most of his life. For my part, too, I have a good deal of the savage instinct of sport in me, and used long ago to say that next to a charter-hunt came the pleasure of a wild *chasse*. Now that charters have been all turned out, the wild taste prevails, and I turn any faculties I have, to grapple with the beasts and birds and fishes."

It was his innate love of sport which led to his intimacy

with another good friend of Moray, whose writings were the first to make the wealth of its natural history known to the world. This was CHARLES ST JOHN (1809-1856), a retired Treasury clerk, the son of General the Hon. Frederick St John, who was the second son of Frederick, second Viscount Bolingbroke, whose 'Wild Sports and Natural History of the Highlands,' 'Tour in Sutherlandshire,' and 'Natural History and Sport in Moray' are classics of their own peculiar kind. In the Memoir which he prefixed to the last of these works, Innes describes in his own genial way his introduction to its author. "I became acquainted with Charles St John," he says, "in my autumn vacation of 1844, while I was Sheriff of Moray. He was then living at Invererne, below Forres, and I used to shoot sometimes on an adjoining property. We had some common friends, and messages of civility had passed between us, but we had not met; when one day in October I was shooting down the river-side and the islands, in the Findhorn, making out a bag of partridges laboriously. It was a windy day, and the birds going off wild spoilt my shooting, which is at best uncertain. While I was on the island, two birds had gone away wounded into a large turnip-field across the river. I waded the river after them, and was vainly endeavouring to recover them with my pointers, when a man pushed through the hedge from the Invererne side, followed by a dog, making straight for me. There was no mistaking the gentleman—a sportsman all over, though without any 'getting up' for sport, and without a gun. I waited for him, and on coming up he said he had seen my birds get up, and offered to find them for me if I would take up my dogs. When my pointers were coupled, he called 'Grip,' and his companion, a large poodle with a Mephistopheles expression, began travelling across and across the drills,

till suddenly he struck the scent, and then with a series of curious jumps on all fours, and pauses between, to listen for the moving of the birds, he made quick work with bird No. 1, and so with bird No. 2. I never saw so perfect a dog for retrieving, but he was not handsome. After this introduction St John and I became frequent companions. I soon found there was something in him beyond the common slaughtering sportsman; and he must have discovered that the old sheriff had some tastes with which he could sympathise. The remainder of that season we were very much together, and often took our exercise and sport in company."

If it was a happy introduction for Innes, it was a lucky one for St John. It led to his becoming a popular writer, under the kindly old sheriff's fostering auspices. "On one occasion we went together to join a battue at Dunphail; but the weather was too bad, and after waiting some hours without taking our guns out of their cover, St John and I returned to Knockomie, a cottage of relations of mine near Forres, who have made it my second home for many years. We travelled in St John's dog-cart through steady heavy rain. I was well clothed in a thick topcoat, and he in a pea-jacket of sealskins of his own shooting, so that there was no suffering from the weather as we drove down through the shelter of the Altyre woods; and the way was shortened to me by my companion telling story after story of sport and adventure, or answering with wonderful precision my questions about birds, beasts, and fishes. He stayed with me that night, and when we were alone after dinner, I broached a subject which had often come into my head since we were so much in each other's society. Why should he not give the world the benefit of his fresh enjoyment of sport—his accurate observation of the habits of animals? At first he ridiculed the idea. He had never written anything

beyond a note of correspondence — didn't think he could write, &c., &c. But at length he listened to some argument. It was very true he had too much idle time, especially in winter—nothing he so much regretted as that he was an idle man. He had some old journals that might be useful. He would note down every day's observations, too. In short, he would try his hand on some chapters next winter. And so it came to pass that during next winter I was periodically receiving little essays on mixed sport and natural history, which it was a great pleasure to me to criticise ; and no one could take the smooth and the rough of criticism more good-naturedly than St John. As these chapters gathered size and consistency, it became a question how to turn them to account, and this was solved by accident. At that time I was in the habit of writing an article occasionally for the 'Quarterly,' and I put together one on Scotch sport, using as my material some of St John's chapters. The paper pleased Mr Lockhart. 'It would itself be sufficient,' he said, 'to float any number. Whether the capital journal laid under contribution be your own or another's I don't know, but every one will wish to see more of it.' I received the editor's letter at Knockomie, and next day the reading of it to St John served for seasoning, as we took our shooting lunch together beside the spring among the whins on the brae of Blervie. Our course was now plain. I divided the money produce of the 'Quarterly' article with St John, who rejoiced greatly in the first money he had ever made by his own exertions ; and on my next visit to London I arranged for him the sale of the whole chapters, the produce of his last winter's industry, which Mr Murray brought out in the popular volume of 'Wild Sports and Natural History of the Highlands.'"

St John's life was much happier after he had, through Innes's assistance, found occupation for his idle hours.

The 'Wild Sports and Natural History of the Highlands' was followed by his 'Tour in Sutherlandshire,' in which he gave his recollections of his life at Rosehall, before "he had discovered the region best suited to his taste and happiness, in the Laigh of Moray." Once found, however, it became his home. His first residence in the county was at Invererne, whose neighbourhood "to the basin of Findhorn—the resort of innumerable wild-fowl; the sandhills of Culbin, so curious, almost so marvellous; the 'Black Forest,' stretching away behind Brodie and Dalvey; the 'Old Bar,' where the seals love to sun themselves on the land; the mouth of the Muckleburn, the favourite haunt of the otter,—made it a most desirable" habitation for a naturalist and sportsman like him. But after spending a short time at Nairn, and afterwards in Edinburgh, he in 1849, for the sake of the education of his children, took up his quarters in Elgin, where, in the old Archdeacon's Manse—the "South College," as it has come to be called—he spent the latter, and perhaps the happiest, years of his life.

His best-known work, 'Natural History and Sport in Moray,' was a compilation from his journals and letters, and was edited after his death by his friend the old sheriff. It is a perfect mine of wealth to the local naturalist, especially as regards the birds of the province of Moray; it is a perfect delight to every lover of nature. There are no immutable canons of literature, and there can be none till fashion is deprived of having any say in the matter. So long as it does not offend against the common rules of taste and grammar, a simple, breezy narrative of personal adventure and experience will always have greater charms for most men than the more elaborate productions of those who have got their knowledge of life only through the cobwebbed windows of a library. St John's book belongs to this class.

It is the production of an intelligent, educated, observant, unaffected gentleman. Hence its wide and deserved popularity.

St John, though, from the vogue which his writings obtained, the best known, was far from being the only, naturalist of Moray in those days. There were then, as now, students of nature as zealous as himself.

Prominent among them was Dr GEORGE GORDON of Birnie. His line was different from that of St John. It was more extended, more all-embracing, perhaps also more scientific. And there was nothing of the sportsman about him. He was simply a student. But he had the same sympathy with nature, and the same habits of accurate observation; and his career was equally useful and estimable. The son of the minister of Urquhart, he was born in 1801; was licensed in 1825; was ordained minister of Birnie in 1832, and after fifty-seven years' ministry in this little country parish, whose population at last census numbered only 402, and whose church is only seated for 211 persons, resigned his cure in 1889, and died in Elgin in 1893. It is difficult for those unconnected with the district properly to understand the place this most estimable and venerable man held in the estimation of the community. He owed it at least as much to his exceptional graces of character as to his high scientific attainments. He was, within his own limited sphere, one of the most remarkable and interesting of men. His whole long life of ninety-three years was devoted to his native district, to which he was passionately attached. He had studied it—its archæology, its natural history, its geology, its fossiliferous remains, its botany, its folk-lore, and its people—as no one had ever done before him, bringing to the task a mind singularly acute, singularly judicious, and singularly

free from prejudice. The result was that he had come to be, and was universally regarded as being, an encyclopædia of local lore and tradition, whose rich stores were at the disposal of every one who chose to seek them. Of a tall commanding presence—he was at least 6 feet high—exceptionally strong and healthy, walking, even in advanced old age, with something like the spring of youth, with keen, piercing black eyes, rugged features, concealed yet not entirely hidden by a shaggy growth of venerable white beard, of courtly manners, with an expression in which it was hard to say whether kindness or dignity was most predominant, always carefully and neatly attired in clerical black, he was one of the most noticeable features in the streets of Elgin during the last three years of his life. His career was singularly deficient in incident; but no man had made a better use of his time and of his abilities. He was an exemplary parish minister; he became the friend, and sometimes even the instructor, of such men as Darwin, Agassiz, Hugh Miller, Murchison, Lyell, Geikie, Ramsay, Huxley, Lubbock, Yarrell, and Hooker—in short, of all the most distinguished scientists of his day. Huxley named one of the most extraordinary reptilian fossils which have been found north of the Grampians—the *Hyperodapedon Gordoni*—after him. Professor Judd paid him a similar compliment in connection with his discoveries of a new form of Dicynodonts; and the services he rendered in other branches of science have been acknowledged by such men as Dr Joass, Macgillivray, and Harvie-Brown. The walls of his homely old-fashioned manse at Birnie, half hidden among luxuriant trees and shrubs, and in summer bright with clustering roses, had received as many distinguished visitors as the college hall of many a great university. As for his tiny little church, venerable in containing the Ronnell bell, and as having been

built on the site of the first cathedral of the diocese, it had seen almost as many archæological pilgrims, under his hospitable guidance, as the great "Lantern of the North" itself. Dr Gordon was the most unassuming of men, and the greater part of his lifelong labours in the cause of science was utilised by others rather than by himself. A few papers in the 'Zoologist,' the 'Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal,' and other scientific periodicals, and a small work, the 'Collectanea to the Flora of Moray,' published in 1839, were all that issued from his own pen. A list of his writings, by Professor Trail, will be found in the 'Annals of Scottish Natural History,' No. 10, April 1894. It is to be regretted that they have not been collected in a more abiding form. Dr Gordon was mainly instrumental in founding, in 1836, the Elgin and Morayshire Literary and Scientific Association, to whose museum—one of the best provincial collections in Scotland—he from time to time gifted his more important scientific treasures. In geology and zoology it is particularly strong. It owes this, in great measure, to George Gordon.

Moray has as yet given birth to no poet, though, like other districts of rural Scotland, it has had its own share of rhymesters and poetasters. Prominent among them is WILLIAM, better known as "WILLIE" HAY, to whom local partiality has accorded a higher rank than his writings appear to deserve. He was of humble extraction. Born in Elgin in 1794, he is said to have been the son of Harry Hay, a sheriff officer, and of "Meggie" Falconer, a well-known vendor of apples and gooseberries, who kept a stall in the High Street. The records of his early life are scanty, but he seems to have been employed by Dr Robert Paterson of the H.E.I.C.S. as stable-boy, and by him introduced to Mr John Anderson, the rector of the Academy, who, recognising



his abilities, undertook the charge of his education. In 1811, on the recommendation of Mr Anderson, he was engaged by the mother of the Rev. Dr Gordon of Birnie to assist him and his brothers with their lessons. The following year he obtained the situation of resident tutor in the family of Mr Cumming of Logie. Logie is a picturesquely situated place near Forres, on the banks of the Findhorn. The scenery around is in the highest degree beautiful, and there is perhaps a greater number of country gentlemen's seats in its immediate vicinity than in any other part of the county. Here for the first time the clever, gawky lad was introduced to refined and cultured society. Amongst other constant visitors to Logie was Mr (afterwards Sir) Thomas Dick Lauder, who was a near neighbour of Mr Cumming's, and his "literary tastes and intellectual powers," we are told, "proved of lasting benefit" to the young student. This was probably the happiest period of Hay's life. But of course it could not last. His ambition was to enter the Church, and accordingly in 1819 he gave up his situation and proceeded to Edinburgh to complete his education. His first object was naturally to take his degree. It was a process that took time. In order to support himself he took to private teaching. He soon managed to get employment. For the next few years his life was a very laborious one. But he was of an independent spirit, and succeeded in holding his own with Fortune. In due time he entered upon his divinity course, but soon discovered that his theological studies were anything but congenial to him. After a rather prolonged period of indecision, he ultimately relinquished his ambition of "wagging his head in a poopit," and resigned himself to an existence which he designed to divide between literature and tuition.

He had attended Professor Wilson's class of Moral Philosophy, and had taken a high place in it. And it was accord-

ingly to him that he turned for assistance in carrying out his views. "Christopher North," of 'Blackwood's Magazine' fame, became his patron. Hay in his turn became Wilson's literary henchman. He contributed to 'Maga' on his own account a translation of George Buchanan's Latin poem of the "Franciscans," and between 1835 and 1837 about a dozen translations from the Greek; but he did a great deal of work for Wilson otherwise, of which no record remains. Through Wilson he procured an introduction to Mr William Blackwood, and some years afterwards went abroad as secretary to his son Alexander, and as tutor to the late Mr John Blackwood, the second youngest son of the founder of the firm.

In 1838 he paid his last visit to Morayshire, and died on the 22d July 1854, after a long illness, aggravated by the affliction of total blindness.

It is almost entirely to his connection with the Edinburgh Morayshire Society<sup>1</sup> that Hay owes his reputation. This association, which was founded on 14th February 1824 for the purpose "of affording relief to occasional objects of misfortune or distress from the county, persons visited with any sudden calamity, or in such pressing exigencies as to be fit objects of the Society's bounty," and which in 1875 was amalgamated under its present appellation of the Edinburgh Morayshire Club with the Edinburgh Morayshire Mechanics' Society, instituted in 1837 or 1839, was in the habit, like other societies of its kind, of following up its annual business meetings with a dinner, at which Speyside whisky was drunk, a haggis from the Gordon Arms at Elgin was consumed, a ram's-horn mull from Manbeen

<sup>1</sup> The London Morayshire Club, a somewhat similar institution, which now does a great deal to promote education in the county, was founded in 1813; fell into abeyance; was reconstituted in 1872, and has attained sufficient importance to have had its "Annals" published in 1894, by James Ray and W. Calder Grant.

was passed round the table, and the members present spent a jolly evening in talking over their early recollections of "Morayland," in drinking patriotic toasts, and singing songs in its honour. Of this Society Hay became a member in 1828. Being a devoted "Morayshireener"—to use his own phrase—and at the same time of a very convivial nature, he soon became a favourite at these gatherings. And having produced one or two songs which took the fancy of the members, he was ultimately elected its Laureate. From that time he felt it incumbent upon him to compose a song for every recurring anniversary meeting. "It was amusing," says his friend Dr William Rhind<sup>1</sup> in his 'Recollections of William Hay,' reprinted from the 'Elgin and Morayshire Courier,' and published in 1855, "to watch the enthusiasm with which he performed the duties of his high and mighty function of bard. First of all he had to seek about for a fit subject of a song—perhaps months before the meeting; then he had to pitch upon an air to which to adjust the versification. Often did he croon this air over and over. . . . Then the composition of the verses went on by fits and starts. A stanza or two, in the enthusiasm of the moment, might be communicated to an acquaintance—then a sough would go abroad of the nature of the coming song; but he was very chary of showing the completed piece to any but his most intimate friends till the appointed evening of meeting. Then,

<sup>1</sup> William Rhind, surgeon (1797-1874), the son of a farmer at Inverlochty, Elgin, practised first in London, then in Elgin, and ultimately in Edinburgh. He was the author of many useful works on Natural History, Geology, Zoology, Geography, and other branches of science. In 1872 he edited a periodical called the 'Ephemera,' which, however, lasted for only a year. But the book by which he is best remembered is his 'Sketches of the Past and Present State of Moray,' with illustrations by Donald Alexander, published in 1839—now one of the rarest, and consequently most expensive, of local books.

when the proper time arrived, the Laureate was called upon, and he rose with great solemnity, taking the little manuscript book of his song from his pocket, but prefacing the performance with an extempore prolegomenon and a pinch of snuff. . . . On several occasions the song of the evening produced so much enthusiasm that it was taken up and sung repeatedly in the course of the night and morning's revel, while the productions [of previous years] were ever afterwards stock songs of the Society, and were sung, as a matter of course, at all the meetings." These songs, which are entirely devoid of anything but local interest, were afterwards collected, along with those of other "bards," in a volume entitled 'The Lintie o' Moray,' of which the first edition, edited by Mr George Cumming, W.S., the secretary of the Society, was published in Forres in 1851, and the second in Elgin in 1887.

Hay always regarded his contributions to 'The Lintie' as his best productions, probably on account of the rapturous reception they invariably received. But, like other authors, he was the worst possible judge of his own works. His translations from the Greek for 'Maga,' and above all a series of graphic sketches of scenes and characters of rural life, which originally appeared in the 'Ephemera,' but were afterwards published in a volume under the title of 'Tales and Sketches by Jacob Ruddiman, A.M., of Marischal College, Aberdeen,' are infinitely superior from a literary point of view. The 'Tales' in particular, though old-fashioned and conventional in style, are full of admirable touches, and show keen powers of observation. It is to be regretted, for the sake of poor "Willie" Hay's reputation, that they have never been reprinted.

Hay's life, on the whole, was a wasted one. Utterly destitute of self-reliance, and tinged with a melancholy which he

owed perhaps to his delicate health, he never gave his talents fair play. But, happier than many more distinguished and more talented than himself, he left behind him a large circle of devoted friends, and his memory is still kindly remembered in his native city, and beyond it.

Whatever may be the estimate of its literary children, there can be no doubt that one of the most eminent musicians of Scotland was born within the boundaries of the old province of Moray. This was WILLIAM MARSHALL of Keithmore, whom Burns—a by no means easily-satisfied critic—pronounced “the first composer of strathspeys of the age.” His career is as interesting as it was extraordinary. Born in 1748 of humble parentage, he entered the service of the Duke of Gordon at the age of twelve, under the house-steward at Gordon Castle. The conscientiousness with which he discharged his duties, and his excellent manners, brought him speedy promotion, and he rose to be butler and ultimately house-steward. He left Gordon Castle in 1790, and shortly after took the large farm of Keithmore from his Grace. Four years later the duke appointed him factor for the Auchindoun district of his estates. This office he held till 1817, when, feeling old age approaching, he resigned both the office and the farm, and retired to Newfield Cottage at Dandaleith, near Craigellachie, a house he had built two years previously as a retreat for his declining years. And here he died on the 29th May 1833, and was buried in the kirkyard of Bellie, near Fochabers. He had married at the age of twenty-five, and had a family of five sons and one daughter, all of whom rose to social rank and position very different from that from which their father had started. Three of his sons, through the influence of the Gordon family, got commissions

in the army ; another died a major in the East India Company's service. His only daughter married Mr John Mac-Innes, an extensive farmer and factor at Dandaleith.

Though it is as a musician that Marshall is chiefly remembered, he was a remarkable man in many other respects. He was entirely self-educated, but he managed to acquire a good knowledge of mathematics, astronomy, optics, architecture, and land-surveying ; and he had even taught himself a little law. As a mechanician he was extraordinarily expert. A wonderful clock, made by his own hands, which showed the months and days of the year, the moon's age, the time of the sun's rising, the signs of the zodiac, with the sun's place for each day in degrees and minutes, which was an everlasting calendar, and did many other astonishing things, and which required winding only once in four or five weeks, is still to be seen at Gordon Castle. Another, less intricate in its mechanism, but interesting from the fact that its motive power is a finely regulated jet of water, is preserved at his Grace's hunting-lodge of Glenfiddich. No one ever tied flies more neatly, handled a rod or a gun better, or wrote a more beautiful hand. He was skilled in falconry, and used to train hawks for the duke. He loved, and was proficient in, all outdoor sports. Few could match him in leaping or running. As for dancing, he excelled in it, and kept it up till he was eighty years old.

His taste for music was very early manifested, and, fortunately for him, it was fostered by the duke and the other members of the ducal family. As a violin-player his masterly bowing was only equalled by his correctness of ear. "His style was characterised by fulness of intonation, precision, and brilliancy of expression, equally removed from vulgarity and false ornament on the one hand, and over-refine-

ment of touch on the other ; and so inspiring was the effect, that when he played reels or strathspeys, the inclination to dance on the part of old and young became irresistible." Once when dining with a party of friends a blind fiddler came by and played underneath the window. One of the company, advancing towards it, asked the man to hand up his fiddle, as there was a "loon" inside just beginning music, whom they wished to hear perform. He did so, and Marshall played some of his strathspeys in his own inimitable style. The old man listened in silence. "Na, na!" he said, when his instrument was handed back to him ; "yon was nae loon : yon could be nane but Marshall himsel'."

It was not till he was well advanced in years that Marshall could be induced to collect his compositions for publication. He had been often begged to do so by the Duke of Gordon and others, but his modesty forbade his acceding to their requests. At last he yielded to the persuasions of the duchess. "If it was not," said the duke to Marshall, laughingly, "that you have submitted to the behests of a lady, I should have been mightily offended." In 1822, accordingly, his first volume of 'Scottish Airs, Melodies, Strathspeys, and Reels' appeared. It was dedicated to the Marchioness of Huntly, and contained about 175 tunes of different kinds, many of which had been previously printed on single sheets for local use. A modest note to the title-page informed the public that several of the strathspeys and reels which it contained had been published by other collectors without his permission. "Of this," he said, "he did not much complain, especially as he had not till now any intention to publish them himself." His only complaints were, their not mentioning his name as their composer, "which, for obvious reasons, were by some neglected ; and in particular, their

changing the original names given by him to other names, according to their fancy. And this being not generally known," he went on, he thought it necessary to "apprise the public that this work is entirely his own composition, and cannot be claimed by any other person whatever." Foremost among these offenders was Nathaniel Gow, the son of the celebrated Neil Gow, who, in one or other of the six collections of reel tunes published by him, had helped himself without acknowledgment to much of Marshall's work. In the 'Glen Collection of Scottish Dance Music,' the first part of which was published in 1891 and the second in 1895, the editor observes: "Nathaniel Gow paid particular attention to Marshall's work. 'The Countess of Dalkeith,' 'Honest men and bonny lassies,' 'Johnny Pringle,' 'Look before you,' 'Look behind you,' 'The Doctor,' 'The Duchess of Manchester's Strathspey,' and 'The North Bridge of Edinburgh,' were not the names originally bestowed by the composer upon his tunes, but were those given them by Gow, who at the same time suppressed Marshall's name. Not confining themselves to altering names, the Gows tinkered some of their victim's tunes. A notorious instance is 'Miss Dallas,' which is found in Gow's fourth collection as 'The Marquis of Huntly's Snuff-Mill, or the Royal Gift,' and asserted to be a composition of Neil Gow's. One or two notes are altered, the main difference being that the tune is lowered one note from G to F major." Marshall, however, was not the man to give himself much trouble about such treatment. The labour of composition was for him its own reward. He continued writing reels and strathspeys to the end, happy if his melodies gained the approbation of his wife, his severest critic, and of his cultured patrons at the castle. In 1845, after he had been twelve years dead, appeared the second volume of his compositions, consisting of 81 airs, jigs, and melodies, named, for the most



part, after his own private friends, or the friends of the ducal circle.

During the course of his long life of eighty-four years, Marshall is credited with having written 114 strathspeys, 84 reels, 21 jigs, 3 hornpipes, 2 marches, and 38 slow airs,—“the whole forming,” says Mr Glen, in the introduction to the work already quoted, “a collection of melodies which, for variety and beauty, are unsurpassed by any other Scottish composer.” Many of them have acquired a national reputation. Many, too, have been wedded to immortal verse. To Marshall’s “Miss Admiral Gordon’s Strathspey” Burns set the words “O’ a’ the airts the wind can blaw.” For “The Marquis of Huntly’s Strathspey” Skinner wrote his admirable verses beginning “Tune your fiddles, tune them sweetly”; and to “Mrs Hamilton of Wishaw” Thomson adapted his exquisite lyric, “My love is like the red, red rose.”

A large number of his compositions were the more or less impromptu outcome of some incident in the domestic history of the family to which he owed so much, and to which he was so much attached. “When the late Duke of Gordon, then a young man, and Marquess of Huntly, set out on his Continental tour, a very tender scene took place at the castle. The elder branches embraced him, and expressed their grief in tears and murmurings. The younger children clung to their brother’s knees and arms, and in sharper notes gave vent to their feelings. Marshall was present during this scene, and taking up his violin, immediately produced his beautiful air of ‘The Marquess of Huntly’s Farewell.’ In this air he endeavoured in the first part to imitate the grief of the parents, and in the latter bars the wailing of his young sisters,” interspersed with the cheery rejoinders of the young Marquis. Nor is the element of humour wanting; for it is said that Lord Huntly, overcome by the pathos of the scene, was at last constrained

to take a very hasty leave and to make a precipitate retreat down the stairs of the castle ; and this Marshall imitates in the series of runs with which the measure closes. Much in the same way Nathaniel Gow afterwards imitated the cries of the Edinburgh fisherwomen, mingled with the chiming of the music-bells in his celebrated air of "Caller Herrin'." In like manner, when the new bridge over the Spey, erected in 1815 by Mr Simpson of Shrewsbury, after a design by Telford, was finished, Marshall celebrated the event in the admirable strathspey which he called "Craig Elachie Bridge"; and many other examples might be cited.

A portrait of Marshall's handsome, venerable, and most kindly person, by Moir, painted at the request and at the expense of George, fifth Duke of Gordon, and from which the well-known engraving is taken, once hung in the hall of Gordon Castle. It was afterwards presented by his successor, the late Duke of Richmond, to Marshall's son-in-law, Mr MacInnes, and is now in the possession of a descendant, Miss Cruickshank of Dufftown. Another relative, Mr W. R. Skinner of Drumin, possesses the valuable violin by Stanier, presented to Marshall by the duke, and which is said to have cost £100 over a century ago.

The province of Moray has contributed its fair share of distinguished travellers to the history of the country. In Morayshire more than one member of the family of GORDON CUMMING, and in Nairnshire Colonel GRANT of Househill—"Grant of the Nile"—have won for themselves a name and conferred reputation on the district, by extending our knowledge of the habitable globe.

Sir WILLIAM GORDON GORDON CUMMING of Altyre and Gordonstoun, second baronet of the line, had by his two marriages a family of sixteen sons and daughters. All his

sons were born sportsmen, and most of them had a strongly developed taste for foreign travel, and an unusual talent for observing and describing what they had seen. ALEXANDER PENROSE, the eldest, who succeeded to his father's title, was the friend of, and almost as good a naturalist as, Charles St John. But it was his younger brother, ROUALEYN GEORGE, who first brought the name of Gordon Cumming prominently before the world.

He was born in 1820. Having, after he left Eton, selected a military career, he went out to India and joined the Madras Cavalry. But the climate did not agree with him, and soldiering he soon found too slow for him. He sold his commission and started off on a hunting expedition. This brought him many trophies but no money; and ere long he returned to his home in Scotland, where he had not long to wait forgiveness from his idolising relations. Shortly after his return his father bought him a second commission—this time in the Cape Mounted Rifles. One would have thought there was a sufficiency of excitement to be found in such a life in those days. Roualeyn was of a different opinion. To one to whom from his boyhood salmon-fishing in Morayshire and roe- and deer-stalking in the noblest forests of Ross-shire and Sutherland were second nature, the trammels of civilised life were as irksome as boots and shoes to the negro soldier. There was then a practically unknown world in South Africa beyond the limits of Cape Colony. Roualeyn resolved to go and explore it. If he did not win fortune, he would at least have the excitement which was as necessary as food or drink to his daring, ardent nature. A second time he sold his commission, and with the proceeds purchased a complete hunter's kit, and in 1843 left Grahamstown for the interior, with the intention of combining the callings of trader and hunter.

His first expedition was only as far as the Vaal river. His second was to Kuruman in Bechuanaland. He had little of anything that seemed like sport to a born Nimrod like himself, till he had once again crossed the Vaal river. Already the larger game were retreating before advancing civilisation. But once in the country of the Bechuanas his most eager hopes were satisfied. Antelopes, oryxes, lions, buffaloes, gnus, rhinoceroses, giraffes, zebras, and other animals abounded. It was a hunter's paradise. Advancing as far as the Bamangwato mountains—the first white man “who had ever penetrated so far into the interior,” where “his axe and spade had to pioneer the way which others have since followed”—he bagged his first elephant, after a dangerous encounter, and visited Sicomy, the chief of the district, who, in daily apprehension from an attack of the Matabele, was, with his tribe, at that time in hiding among the wild caves and secluded retreats of those rocky mountains.

In the course of this expedition he fell in with a poor Bushman who had in his youth been captured by Dutch Boers at a massacre of his countrymen, and had absconded in consequence of their cruel treatment. This diminutive creature had been named Ruyter by his Dutch masters. His affection was gained by the present of a suit of clothes and a glass of gin. He remained the faithful companion of all Roualeyn's subsequent wanderings, and ultimately accompanied his master home to Scotland. Roualeyn also, during this excursion, made the acquaintance of Dr Moffat, the great missionary, and of his son-in-law, Dr Livingstone, whose hospitality he enjoyed, and whose friendship he secured. In after years, when the “Lion Hunter's” hairbreadth escapes and feats of sportsmanship, hitherto unparalleled, had begun to be discredited by a certain section of the British public, Livingstone went out of his way to bear testimony to the veracity of his much-maligned

brother Scot, affirming that he had not told the half of his adventures to his incredulous countrymen.

After having been absent for more than a year, Roualeyn returned to Grahamstown. But he did not stay long there. He was eager to return to the wild, free, roving life which suited him so well, and which he loved. He longed to be once more scouring the "Veldt" on horseback, in his old grey kilt and Badenoch brogues, potting the "boks" when they came at nightfall to drink at the fountains, passing sleepless nights on the watch for lions, pitting his manhood against the bravest bulls in a herd of elephants, living on coffee and the branded flesh of the animals that he slaughtered, sleeping at night, wrapped up in a blanket, by the side of his ox-waggon home. His third expedition was again to the Bamangwato country, where he bagged his fifteenth elephant, but found the lions too numerous to be agreeable. It did not last long. In February 1847 he was back again at Grahamstown, with a store of ivory and ostrich-feathers, which he sold for something like £1000—a sum which went a long way to recoup him for the expenses of his previous excursions.

On the 11th March he was off once more. This time he took the route from the military station of Colesberg across the Vaal river, through the territory of the chief Mahura, to the Maritsani river. Ultimately he came to the valley of the river Limpopo, which now forms the northern boundary of the Transvaal. This expedition was less fortunate than its predecessors. Two of his horses were killed and consumed by lions. One of his party was seized by the neck by a lion and killed before it could be driven off. And so fatal were the attacks of the tsetse-fly upon his stock that he had to send a messenger to Livingstone's camp for help to return to Colesberg.

Roualeyn's fifth and last expedition (March 1848) was again to the Limpopo region. On this occasion he had the advantage of being accompanied by a friend—a Mr Orpen, "a mighty Nimrod," son of the Rev. Dr Orpen of Colesberg. Starting from Colesberg with three waggons "well-manned and stored," the travellers in due time reached the Vet river. Here they were rejoiced at the sight of one of the most wonderful displays that Roualeyn had ever witnessed during his varied wanderings. "On my right and left the plain exhibited one purple mass of graceful blesboks, which extended without a break as far as my eyes could strain: the depth of these vast legions covered a breadth of about 600 yards." Scarcely had they passed when another troop, numbering thousands, cantered by. The whole country was alive with game. Zebras, blue wildebeests, hartebeests, buffaloes, sassabys, elands, abounded. Lions, too, were met with, and afforded brilliant sport. Roualeyn shot his hundredth elephant. The "cruise" bade fair to be amongst the most glorious of his experiences. But in the midst of all these bright prospects Mr Orpen was nearly killed by a leopard, and Roualeyn was prostrated by an attack of rheumatic fever.

From that time till its conclusion, though far from barren in results, it was more or less a chapter of accidents. One misfortune seemed to follow another. The horse of the Bushman "boy," Ruyter, was ripped up by a buffalo,—Ruyter himself having a narrow shave for life. The stock suffered much from want of water. Fourteen of the horses and fifteen head of cattle died. The Boers were unfriendly, and were reported to be contemplating an attack. It was possibly, therefore, with something like a feeling of relief that at sundown on the 18th March 1849—exactly a year since they had started—the travellers with their waggons entered the

town of Colesberg and took up their quarters opposite the old barracks.

Gordon Cumming's wanderings had now lasted five years. He was far from being satiated with African sport or tired of his adventurous life. But his health was not so good as it had been. He felt he had been overtaxing his powers. His nerves and his constitution had been considerably shaken by rheumatic fever and the strength of the scorching African sun.

On the 7th June he set sail for England, taking with him his faithful Ruyter, the Cape waggon which had been his home all those years, and his invaluable collection of sporting trophies. Altogether his impedimenta weighed upwards of 30 tons.

Once at home, he was brought face to face with the question of how he was to maintain himself. Notwithstanding some fairly profitable ventures as a trader, he had not succeeded in making his fortune. He had no fixed income, and it was necessary for him to live. The only project he could hit upon to provide the requisite means was to exhibit his collection. In this business he spent the remainder of his life. For a time he went about the country with it, visiting several of the chief cities of the kingdom, everywhere drawing large audiences by the vivacity of his descriptive lectures and the novelty of his exhibits. It was one of the greatest attractions of London in 1851—the memorable year of the first Great Exhibition. But some eight years before his death he gave up this roaming, and settled down with his collection at Fort Augustus, where he erected a large hall for its reception. Travellers by steamer up and down the Caledonian Canal have nearly an hour's detention at the Fort while the vessel passes the locks. This interval Gordon Cumming ingeniously turned to advantage. When the steamer stopped, a tall, strikingly

handsome figure, clad in full Highland dress, and followed by two magnificent white goats, was seen standing on the bank. His picturesque appearance naturally led tourists to ask who and what he was. When they were told that it was the famous African hunter, and that his collection, which was hard by, was open to the inspection of any one who chose to pay a small fee for admission, there were few who did not avail themselves of this pleasant way of passing an hour, which many would fain have prolonged. He himself lived in the grim old Fort, and there he died on the 24th March 1866, at the comparatively early age of forty-six. His funeral was a very striking one. The whole population of the little village, and Highlanders from many a distant glen, with whom he was immensely popular, followed his coffin, on which were laid his sword, his Bible, his Highland bonnet, and his plaid, carried in procession, his piper at the head, to the steamer by which it was to be conveyed to Inverness. From thence it was taken by rail the same day to Elgin, and finally laid at rest in the quaint old burying-ground of Michael Kirk, Gordonstoun, four miles from Elgin, where so many of his family lie.

Few modern books of travel have produced so great a sensation as his 'Five Years of a Hunter's Life in the Far Interior of South Africa,' which was published in 1850 by John Murray of London.<sup>1</sup> Its graphic and vigorous diction, its wealth of incident and adventure, the intense love of nature—of streams and mountains and woods, of beasts and birds—which pervaded it, rendered it immediately popular. And it, almost for the first time, introduced the reading world to a portion of the globe which, fortunately or unfortunately, has since then engrossed, and still engrosses, so large an amount of the attention of his countrymen. Yet his book, eloquent as it is, but

<sup>1</sup> It was reprinted in 1893. In 1858 a condensed edition of it appeared under the title of 'The Lion-Hunter of South Africa.'



feebly disclosed the profound depths of its author's character. The fearlessness of his nature, his courage, his daring—in a word, his manliness—could hardly, when the truthfulness of his narrative was at length reluctantly conceded, be gainsaid. But the warmth of his affections, his chivalry, his tender-heartedness, the deep strain of romance and poetry which he, no doubt, inherited from his Celtic ancestors, and which led one who knew him well to say of his utterances on his death-bed that they were like “a page of Ossian,” were known to few outside his family circle. He was a thoroughly natural man. His eccentricities of dress and manner in his later years were not the affectations they appeared to the public, but the distressing result of sunstroke while lying fever-stricken on the African desert. Controlled within more conventional limits—if this had been possible to such a man as he—the life-work of Roualeyn Gordon Cumming might have been of greater benefit to his country, and his name and fame thereby rendered more enduring than, as things turned out, they are in the future likely now to be.

His brother WILLIAM, now Colonel GORDON CUMMING, who was nine years his junior, had all Roualeyn's love of sport, and a great deal of his adventurous energy. But with him, the soldier has always predominated over the traveller, and the sportsman been subordinated to the more imperious demands of duty. He joined the East India Company's service in 1846 as ensign; was promoted to the rank of lieutenant in 1853, and to that of captain in 1858. From an early period of his career he was intrusted with duties of a responsible character. In 1856 he was appointed Deputy Bheel Agent, and Political Assistant to the Agent of the Governor-General at Maunpore. But it was in the anxious times of, and subsequent to, the Mutiny that his

varied abilities found their fullest scope. In 1858 he accompanied the Southpoora field force to the hills as Political Officer; and during that year he was no less than four times in action. In 1859 he was appointed Political Agent for the Bheel district. Here he was the only white man in a territory as large as Yorkshire. He not only managed to uphold the authority of "John Company," but he succeeded in organising an effective police force from the wild men among whom his lot was for the moment cast. In 1861 he joined the Bombay Staff Corps, and not long after retired with the rank of lieutenant-colonel. Having returned home, he was in 1872 appointed to the command of the 6th Volunteer Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders; and in 1881 he received the honorary rank of colonel. In his delightful book, 'Wild Men and Wild Beasts,' which was published in 1861 by Messrs Edmondston & Douglas of Edinburgh, he describes, with admirable point, simplicity, and vigour, some of his most notable experiences in camp and jungle.

But it is their sister, Miss CONSTANCE FREDERICA GORDON CUMMING, the twelfth child of Sir William's first marriage, who has most largely contributed to the literary reputation of the family. Miss Gordon Cumming stands in the forefront of lady-travellers of the day. In the course of her twelve years' wanderings she has seen more of the world than falls to the lot of most of her sex. Her voyages have extended from the Hebrides to the Himalayas, to Ceylon, the Fiji, Friendly, Navigators, and Society Islands, to California, Japan, China, to the Hawaiian volcanoes, to America, and to Egypt. The results of her travels have been recorded in ten admirable works, which have obtained a wide and deserved reputation.

Of late years her energies have been devoted to the promo-

tion of a novel and interesting phase of mission work, which she has explained at full length in her 'Work for the Blind in China.' The story of her connection with this may be thus briefly stated: She had finished her long travels, and had taken her ticket home from Shanghai, when she was persuaded to cancel her passage and to proceed to Peking. Here she found herself a guest at the London Mission. Under the same roof there was lodging a young Scotch colporteur named Murray, whose arm had been torn off in his father's saw-mill near Glasgow, and who, from the time of his arriving in China eight years previously, had been possessed by a great longing to help the very numerous and totally neglected blind. Four months before Miss Gordon Cumming's arrival, Murray had succeeded in perfecting a very simple system of representing the 408 sounds of Mandarin Chinese by making Braille's embossed dots represent Numerals, and then merely numbering the sounds. By this means blind persons are enabled, after a very short period of instruction, to read and write their own language correctly.

When the success of this method had been fully proven, Mr Murray set himself to consider whether the same benefits might not be extended to illiterate and poor sighted persons. In a very short time he solved the problem. By using black lines, plainly visible to the eye, instead of the embossed dots he had devised for the fingers of the blind, he substituted a new and very simple system of characters for "the bewildering idiographs" employed by the Chinese, and has thus rendered it possible for the most ignorant persons to attain in a few weeks a fluency in reading which even educated Chinamen cannot attain after six or eight years of constant practice. And this system is available for all illiterate persons in all the provinces where Mandarin Chinese is in use—in other words, in four-fifths of the empire.

The first anxious experiment in this greatly enlarged development of Mr Murray's first invention may be narrated in Miss Gordon Cumming's own words: "When after considerable difficulty Mr Murray had succeeded in getting these symbols cast in metal printing-type, he gave it to some of his blind pupils, asking what it was. After a moment's examination they said, 'Why, it's our own type—only you have used lines instead of dots. Why have you done this?' 'Because you, blind pupils, are henceforth going to print books for the sighted, and *you* are going to teach *them* to read and write.' And this is precisely what they are now doing—a beautiful and pathetic work, likely to prove of incalculable value in mission work." Murray's invention of the Numeral type is as yet but a small acorn, but it is capable of developing into a widespreading tree of life, and I look forward to a time when Murray's name will be held in honour as the Caxton of Christian China."

Whether Miss Gordon Cumming's sanguine aspirations will ever be realised time alone can show. Meantime the work is being vigorously carried on with very hopeful results; and it is scarcely to be wondered at that Miss Cumming, whose whole life has been dedicated to the propagation of knowledge, should find in labour such as this a fitting object for her enlightened energy.

JAMES AUGUSTUS GRANT, the companion of Speke in his last expedition—that in which the centuries-old problem of the sources of the Nile was once and for ever set at rest—was, like so many other distinguished Scotsmen, a son of the manse. The fourth and youngest son of the Rev. J. Grant, parish minister of Nairn, he was born on the 11th April 1827, and educated at the grammar-school of Aberdeen and at the old Marischal College there. Here

he picked up a knowledge of chemistry, mathematics, and the natural sciences, which was to serve him in good stead in after years. Through the good offices of Mr James Augustus Grant of Viewfield, a retired Indian civilian and convener of the county, one of his father's elders, whose name-child he was, he obtained in 1844 a cadetship in the E.I.C.S., and in 1846 was commissioned to the 8th Native Bengal Infantry. For the next dozen years his life was the ordinary one of an Indian soldier. He was present with his regiment at the two sieges of Moulton in 1848, and at the battle of Gujerat in 1849. In 1853 he was appointed its adjutant, and remained so until 1857, when his regiment having mutinied, he was attached to the force under Sir Henry Havelock and Sir James Outram for the relief of Lucknow. He was wounded while commanding the rear-guard, and was blockaded in Lucknow for two months. On 23d October 1858 he proceeded on sick certificate to England. It was the greatest piece of luck that ever befell him. It transformed what bade fair to be an ordinary though an honourable career into an extraordinary one, and brought him in due time fame, honour, and reputation.

On the 8th May 1859 Captain Speke arrived in England from his second African expedition, in which he had discovered (30th July 1858) the great Victoria Nyanza Lake—"a lake big enough to hold any three counties in Scotland," as Grant afterwards described it—which, rightly or wrongly, he thought was likely to turn out to be the true source of the Nile. The following day Speke called on Sir Roderick Murchison, the President of the Royal Geographical Society, showed him his map, and communicated to him his surmises. Sir Roderick at once accepted his views, and knowing his ardent desire to prove to the world that he was right, said to him, "Speke, we must send you there again." "From that

day," says Speke, "my third expedition in Africa may be said to have commenced." Soon the project took shape. The Government agreed to give £2500 towards the expenses of the expedition; Speke undertook to make good the rest, "whatever it might cost." Grant, as soon as he heard that the expedition was definitely decided upon, volunteered to accompany it. He and Speke had been friends since 1847. They were both Indian officers of the same age, and equally fond of field sports. They had gone tiger-shooting on the Sarda together in 1854, and their friendship remained unbroken. Grant's offer was at once accepted. Speke himself was agreeable, and "it was only Christian charity," so the Geographers said, "to provide him with a companion." He was accordingly appointed as second in command, but there were sundry restrictions put upon him. Speke and not he was to write the account of the expedition. He was to divulge nothing of its progress or of its results either in private letters or through the press; and all his collections, sketches, &c., were to go to the Geographical Society. Lastly, he was, more or less, to bear his own expenses.

To most men such conditions might have appeared almost intolerable. Grant never gave them a moment's thought. His ardent love of adventure, his friendship for Speke, his desire to see a new world and a new life, prevailed over all other considerations. He applied for and obtained the necessary leave. Later on, when the expedition had actually started, he began to feel the irksomeness of his obligations. "So disgusting," he writes to his sister on 30th September 1860, "that I can't send you any of my poor little views; but I must be patient." "Now, I must conclude," he says in another letter (March 6, 1861), "hoping I've mentioned nothing the Geographers would be displeased at me for writing, for they are *dreadfully* touchy should any of their (!)

information be made public." And many other such passages might be cited from his correspondence.

Urged by Speke, however, Grant ultimately did write a book—'A Walk across Africa ; or, Domestic Scenes from my Nile Journal,'<sup>1</sup>—published in 1864 by Messrs W. Blackwood & Sons. It was, perhaps, none the less attractive that it was a simple narrative of his own personal experience, and that it carefully eschewed all references to the geographical part of the expedition.

The travellers left England on the 30th April 1860 in the *Forte*, bearing the flag of Admiral the Hon. Sir Henry Keppel, K.C.B., which had been commissioned to convey Sir George Grey, the newly appointed Governor of the Cape, to his colony. The interest which Sir George took in the expedition turned out to be of inestimable value to the explorers. It procured them a grant from the Colonial Legislature of £300 to purchase mules for the expedition ; and it also provided them with a contingent of eleven Hottentot soldiers, part of the Governor's bodyguard, who, however, did not turn out so valuable an acquisition as was at first supposed.

On the 25th September 1860—a lucky day, for it was the anniversary of Havelock's entry into Lucknow—the travellers, having completed their arrangements, left Zanzibar for the mainland of Africa, and on the 2d October the expedition actually started. It consisted of 301 souls, all told ; and they had, in addition, for the first thirteen stages, an escort of twenty-five Beloochee soldiers.

<sup>1</sup> Its odd title is thus explained in the preface : " Last season Sir Rod-  
erick [Murchison] did me the honour to introduce me to her Majesty's First  
Minister, Viscount Palmerston, and on that occasion his lordship good-  
humouredly remarked, 'You have had a long walk, Captain Grant.' The  
saying was one well fitted to be remembered and to be told again ; and my  
friendly publishers and others recommended that it should form the leading  
title of my book."

The history of this expedition and its results—up to the present time the most memorable and important of all the mid-African journeys of exploration—are so well known that it is unnecessary to repeat them here. It was full of incident and excitement. For three years the two leaders saw never a white face but their own. They carried their lives in their hands. They had to contend with difficulties innumerable, with sickness, with starvation, with savage treachery, with savage suspicion, with the desertion of their servants, with the plunder of their property, with want of means. Both of them suffered severely from the effects of the deadly climate. But Grant, on the whole, was the more unfortunate of the two. In March 1862, when Speke left Karagwé to proceed to Uganda, Grant was in such a wretched state of health that he had to be left behind, and it was not till the end of May that the two met again at the court of the famous king M'tessa. In July he was still so much of an invalid that he was unable to accompany Speke to the Victoria Nyanza, and thus lost the honour of sharing his discovery, and seeing the waters of the main branch of the White Nile come tumbling over the Ripon Falls. But he never lost heart. His letters home are full of an almost boyish light-heartedness. Everything is new, everything is charming. It was with difficulty, and only after having experienced its effects, that he was brought to believe in the unhealthiness of the climate. "We jog on," he writes from Mburiga to his sister (November 1, 1860), "in that dreaded of countries, Africa, in the most easy way, feeling after our dinners as comfortable as if we had our legs under your table drinking 'Brackla.'"<sup>1</sup> Home-sickness, in the aggravated form from which so many travellers

<sup>1</sup> The Brackla Distillery, four miles from Nairn, is the only one in the county, and was founded in 1812 by Captain William Fraser. Its annual output is between 130,000 and 140,000 gallons.



suffer, never seems to have attacked him. But his thoughts dwelt long and lovingly on the old country and the old life; and nothing delighted him so much as to find in some rural scene a resemblance to the Findhorn or the Conan, or in some everyday incident the analogue of what might be witnessed at Cawdor or Nairn. "To-day," he says, writing from Zanzibar on the 10th September, "I went through the slave-market. You have seen at common markets at home, fellows going about hawking things and saying, 'A Sheffield razor, only 6d.,' or any other call. Well, this is the way they do with slaves here. The creatures are either led by the hand or they follow their owners, who keep calling out, 'A fine slave, &c., only——' If a purchaser comes forward, the creature is felt and examined in every part of his or her body, and so on. They are dressed out as your servant lasses or lads would be for a feeing-market—*i.e.*, they have washed in the morning, their woolly heads shine, and a cloth covers their loins. There is nothing depressing in the sight of the throng, except their sad looks. Boat-loads pass here daily for the market, huddled together like pigs at a fair."

Grant landed in England on 17th June 1863. He found himself a much more important personage than when he had left it. But he was not the man to traffic upon his reputation, and, except for the fame it brought him and the society into which it introduced him, his long "walk across Africa" never profited him much. In 1864, indeed, on the death of his friend Speke by the accidental discharge of his own gun, he was offered the consulate at Fernando Po, but he did not accept it. He preferred going back to India to finish his term of service, and thus secure his pension. In 1865 he was appointed second in command of the 4th Goorkha Regiment, then stationed in the Himalayas. In 1868 he took part in the Abyssinian Expedition, and did yeoman

service in connection with its Intelligence Department. In the same year he retired from the army. In 1872 he purchased the estate of Househill, close to Nairn. For the next twenty years of his life his time was spent mainly between London and his north-country home. He died on the 11th February 1892.

He was, as a writer in 'Blackwood's Magazine' called him, the "last of the old school of African explorers"—men who were determined to make the name of Englishman respected and trusted, as well as feared, among the savage tribes with whom they came in contact. In private life he was genial and kindly, and, in his later years, very retiring in his disposition. The warmest and most sympathetic of friends, especially to the young and to those to whom he thought he could be of assistance, exemplary in all the relations of life, the most sincere of Christians, his death at the comparatively early age of sixty-five, and before he had attained to the full fruition of those honours which his meritorious services to science and civilisation so well deserved, was a distinct loss not only to his friends but to his country.

The soldier of the highest distinction that the province has as yet produced is General Sir GEORGE BROWN, G.C.B., who commanded the Light Division in the Crimea. He was the third son of Mr George Brown, factor for the Morayshire estates of James, fourth Earl of Seafield. He was born at Linkwood, an old-fashioned, ivy-mantled country-house about a mile from Elgin, on the 3d July 1790; and here also he died on the 27th August 1865.

There never was any doubt as to what young George's line in life was to be. Even as a "loon" at the Elgin Academy his soldierly inclinations developed themselves. He is said to have mustered a corps of schoolboys like himself, drilled

them regularly, and indeed made so serious a business of the affair that lessons were neglected. Superior authority had to interpose, and the amateur regiment had to be disbanded. He was not, however, the first soldier in the family. His two elder brothers were already in the army; and he had an uncle—his father's younger brother John, afterwards major-general and deputy quartermaster-general at the Horse Guards—who, perhaps, was primarily responsible for the outbreak of military ardour which had so seriously attacked all the Linkwood lads. It was certainly his uncle John who smoothed the path for George's joining the service, as he had doubtless also done for his two elder nephews. He took him with him to England when he was a mere child of eleven or twelve years of age, placed him at the Military College then housed at Great Marlow, and finally got him a commission in the 43d Regiment before he had completed his sixteenth year.

Fortune befriended him from the first. He had hardly joined when he was ordered on active service. In 1807 he was present at the siege and capture of Copenhagen. In 1808 he was sent with his regiment to the Peninsula, and had the good luck to be present at most of Wellington's famous battles. More than once he was in imminent personal danger. At Oporto he was struck on the breast with a spent ball, but it never gave him the least inconvenience. At Talavera he was wounded in both thighs. At Busaco he was engaged in a hand-to-hand encounter with one of Massena's staff, and only disabled him with a sword-thrust after a desperate conflict.

During the brief peace of 1814 he was sent to America with the reinforcements under General Ross, and saw the last scenes of the American war. Nearly forty years of peace ensued. But he had got his foot so firmly planted on the ladder that his promotion went on unchecked. In 1826 he was appointed to the command of the 2d battalion of the Rifle

Brigade. In 1841 he was made deputy adjutant-general, with the rank of major-general. Ten years later he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-general, and appointed Adjutant-General of the Forces. That office he held till December 1853.

His subsequent career belongs to national history. Fortunately, in his "Memoranda and Observations on the Crimean War, 1854-55," written in 1857, and in his subsequent "Notes on Mr Kinglake's Second Volume," compiled in 1863, in which he traversed, in language more plain perhaps than pleasant, many of the historian's statements, especially his strictures upon himself, both of which were in 1879 published as a pamphlet by his relations "for private circulation only,"<sup>1</sup> we possess from his own pen a succinct narrative of his connection with this momentous struggle. From this *brochure* we learn that as soon as he knew that war in the East was inevitable and that Lord Raglan had been appointed to the command of the British contingent, he went to the Horse Guards and placed his services at the Commander-in-Chief's disposal. His offer was promptly accepted, and he was ordered to proceed at once to Gallipoli. Scarcely had he landed when Lord Raglan nominated him to the command of the "Light Division," which "consisted of the 7th, 23d, 33d, 19th, 77th, and 88th Regiments, together with the 2d battalion of the Rifle Brigade, a troop of horse-artillery, and a battery of 9-pounders, the whole divided into two brigades," under Generals Airey and Buller, both of whom were his personal friends. With this division he proceeded to the Crimea, and took part in the battles of Alma and Inkerman. In the former, the grey horse which he rode received no less than seven wounds and had four balls in him. In the

<sup>1</sup> Elgin. Printed at the 'Moray Weekly News' office, by James Watson, 1879.

latter, which has been called the "Soldiers' Battle"—though why, Sir George always professed he was never able to understand—he was unfortunately wounded himself in the arm, and he had to go to Malta to recruit. But a fortnight's rest put him to rights again, and in less than a couple of months he was back at his work. He arrived in time to take part in the ill-advised expedition to Kertch, and received much unmerited odium for the part he was, as he says, "reluctantly compelled" to take in burning some of "the best houses" in the town. Meantime the siege of Sebastopol was dragging its slow length along. On the 18th June—"Waterloo Day"—a combined attack by the French and English forces on the Malakoff and Redan forts had been arranged for. The French were to attack and take the Malakoff. When that was done the English were to assault the Redan. To General Brown was assigned the command of the British troops. The complete failure of the French attack on the Malakoff rendered the carrying out of the other part of the programme impossible. This was the last operation of importance in which Sir George took part. On the 23d he became so ill that he was obliged to be removed on board ship. On the 30th—two days after his chief Lord Raglan had died—his condition had become so grave that his medical adviser ordered him home "to save his life." He improved, however, so rapidly on the voyage, that on his arrival in England he "found himself entirely free from disease, and fully expected to be in a state to return to the Crimea after a few weeks' rest—an expectation which subsequently proved to be correct." He had "scarcely got down to the country" when he found himself superseded "by the promotion over my head of an officer who had been little more than two months with the army, and who was just ten years junior to me as a general officer; and this, too, notwith-

standing that an order had been previously sent out, directing me to assume the command of the army on Lord Raglan's demise." Into the merits or demerits of his supersession this is not the place to enter. It is sufficient to say that he felt this treatment keenly, and that in the pamphlet already referred to he attributed it to "the indiscretion," the only one, so far as he knew, he had ever committed, "of speaking my mind with too much freedom to the Secretary for War—a circumstance which that self-confident functionary does not seem to have forgotten or been disposed to overlook."

He was certainly not the man to conceal his real sentiments. This is abundantly plain from his narrative. Over and over again he criticises the action of the authorities at home with a freedom which, coming from one who knew so well what he was talking about, could have been anything but agreeable, had his views—as in point of fact they did—ever come to their ears. He had, besides, certain peculiar notions of his own which he never concealed, and which certainly did not add to his popularity. One of these was a perfect horror of all newspaper correspondents. Another was a partiality for soldierly smartness in the appearance of his men, which led him to interfere in what to others seemed entirely insignificant details of their dress and accoutrements. For this he has often been stigmatised as a martinet. But as in his opinion smartness was essential not only to discipline but to health, his views were probably more enlightened than those of his critics. Nothing could better illustrate his peculiar notions, as well as the honest, outspoken character of the man, than the manner in which, in his "Memoranda and Observations," he refers to the Duke of Newcastle's celebrated despatch to Lord Raglan recommending the army "to let their beards grow, after the fashion of the East"—

"His lordship, as may be supposed, was greatly averse to

the introduction of such an innovation, for which there was not the smallest reason or necessity, and rightly pointed out that although English gentlemen travelling in these countries, as his Grace had done, might, without inconvenience and with impunity, be permitted to exercise their fancies by adopting the customs of the country in that and in other respects, the soldiers of the army, and the lower orders of the people of England in general, associated notions of personal cleanliness with the act of shaving their beards, and that the introduction of such a practice as he proposed would only be to give encouragement to filthy habits which would impair the discipline and injure the health of the troops, without adding in any manner whatever to their comfort or efficiency." Notwithstanding Lord Raglan's objections and remonstrances, the duke's recommendation was given effect to. "The consequence was, as might have been expected, that every one followed his own fancy; that all the smartness and soldier-like appearance, both of officers and men, were soon lost sight of; that the latter became slovenly and dirty in their habits to an extent that injured their health, and greatly aggravated the diseases with which they were shortly assailed; and all this without in any manner improving their military qualities or adding in any respect to their comfort!"

Superseded though he had been, General Brown's services were of too valuable an order to pass without reward. And his retirement for a time from active duty, necessitated by the state of his health, brought with it an ample crop of honours and dignities. He was thanked by the Queen in a despatch from the Secretary for War. He was created a G.C.B. and a K.H. The Sultan of Turkey bestowed on him the Order of the Medjidie of the first class, and the Emperor Napoleon gave him the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour. His own countrymen, too, did their part in showing him



honour. On his return to Elgin in 1855 he was entertained at a public banquet in the Assembly Rooms—the most splendid entertainment of the kind that had ever been given to a public man in the county. The event was rendered all the more memorable by the fact that only an hour or two before the dinner the Defiance coach had arrived in the town bringing with it the news of the fall of Sebastopol.

Later on—in 1860—when his health was once more fully restored, Sir George was appointed to the command of the forces in Ireland, an office which he held till about two months before his death. It was a fitting conclusion to an honourable and distinguished career.

Such are a few of the modern “worthies” of Moray and Nairn. It is a record of which the old province has no need to be ashamed.





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# INDEX.

---

- Aberdeen, visit of Mary, Queen of Scots, to, 152—Montrose at, 187.
- Agnes of Dunbar, Black, the story of, 144, 145.
- Aitkin, James, Bishop of Moray, 104, 105.
- Alban, the kingdom of, 24.
- Alexander I., parentage and character of, 53—foundation of the Bishopric of Moray by, 54.
- Alexander II., interest in Elgin Cathedral manifested by, 60, 64, 65—foundation of Pluscarden Priory by, *ib.*
- Alford, Montrose's victory at the battle of, 195.
- Andrew de Moravia, establishment of Elgin Cathedral by, 60—energy of, 61, 64.
- Arkinholm, the battle of, 147.
- Auldearn, St Colm's market at, 22—Montrose's victory at the battle of, 190 *et seq.*
- Badenoch, Wolf of, excommunication of the, by the Bishop of Moray, 67—destruction of Elgin Cathedral by, 68—death of, *ib.*
- Bain, Mr George, the 'History of Nairnshire' by, 365.
- Balblair, Cumberland's forces at, 221.
- Ballachastell, the seat of the Clan Grant, 174.
- Bellenden, John, Archdeacon of Moray, 89.
- Bertram, C. J., Richard of Cirencester and, 12.
- Birnie, the church of, description of, 55.
- Bishopric of Moray, foundation of the, by Alexander I., 54—its original limits, *ib.*—the cathedral churches of the, 55 *et seq.*—the great power and value of the, 76 *et seq.*—the first Protestant occupant of, 98—effect of abolition of prelacy on, 107—total duration of, *ib.*—influence of, 108.
- Black Agnes of Dunbar, the story of, 144, 145.
- Brackla distillery, 407.
- Bricius, Bishop of Moray, activity of, 57—causes the transference of the cathedral church from Kinneddar to Spynie, and from Spynie to Elgin, 57, 60.
- Brodie, Alexander, fourteenth Laird of Brodie, 259—his inconsistency and hypocrisy, 261, 262.
- Brodies of Brodie, early traditions of, 258—first appearance of, in history, *ib.*—vandalism of, at Elgin, *ib.*
- Brown, General Sir George, early life of, 409—war experiences of, 410—command of the "Light Division" in the Crimea by, 411—account of the supersession of, 412—personal traits of, 413—triumphant return to Elgin, 415.
- Bruce, King Robert the, candidature of, supported in Moray, 124—early career of, 133—his friends and enemies in Moray, 134—elevation of Moray into an earldom by, 136.
- Brude, King of the Picts, the conversion of, 16 *et seq.*
- Buchan, Isobel, Countess of, cruel punishment of, 135.
- Buchanan, Maurice, writer of the 'Liber Pluscardensis,' 115.
- Bur, Alexander, Bishop of Moray, petition of, to Robert III. concerning the restoration of Elgin Cathedral, 69.



- Burghhead, identification of, with the Winged Camp of the Picts, 9—description of the town, 9 *et seq.*—the ancient ramparts of, 10—the "Broch Bailies," *ib.*—alleged Roman military station at, 11—early Christian settlement at, 18—identification of, with Caer-nam-brocc, 19—description of the so-called "Roman well" at, *ib. et seq.*—the meaning of the stone-bulls of, 21—curious superstition among the fishers of, 22—probable identification of, with the "borg" of Torfness built by Sigurd, 29—the battle of Torfness, 33—description of the burning of the clavie at, 339 *et seq.*
- Burns, Robert, visit of, to Castle Grant, 226.
- Bute, Marquis of, restoration of the Greyfriars' chapel at Elgin by the, 115.
- Caledonii, a general name for Northern Picts, 8.
- Campbell, Sir John, usurpation of the thanage of Cawdor by, 253—heritable Sheriff of Nairn, 254.
- Caplaken, the ancient custom called, 341.
- Cavel, casting the, the custom of, 340.
- Cawdor, early history of, 248—the old castle of, 249—the keep as it now is, 250—the origin of the name, *ib.*—legends connected with, 251—the Campbells of, 252.
- Cawdor, William, sixth Thane of, 249.
- Charles Edward, landing of, 1745, 213—advance to Inverness of, 215—narrow escape of, at Moy Hall, 216—futile march on Nairn of, 223.
- Christianity, introduction of, into Moray, 17, 18.
- Clava, the stone circles of, 6.
- Claverhouse, Graham of, visit of, to Duffus Castle, 204.
- Clavie, the burning of the, 339 *et seq.*
- "Colkitto," the bravery of Alastair Macdonnell of, at the battle of Cul-loden, 189 *et seq.*
- Columba, the story of, at the court of King Brude, 17—a legend concerning, 18, 19—traces of, in local place-names, 22, 23—expulsion of the clergy of, by King Nectan, 23.
- Comyn, John, the Black, hostility of, to Bruce, 134—cruelty of, to his wife, 135—defeat of, by Edward Bruce at Inverurie, *ib.*—defeat of, by Robert the Bruce at Old Meldrum, 136.
- Comyn, John, the Red, defeat of, by Edward I. at Lochindorb, 132.
- Corrichie, the battle of, 152.
- Counties, the division of Scotland into, 49.
- Craigellachies, associations of the two, with the Clan Grant, 172.
- Cromdale, the battle of, 205.
- Cruithne, 4.
- Culbin, the ancient estate of, 243—present-day appearance of, 244—the great sandstorm of 1694, 245.
- Culloden, the battle of, 224.
- Cup-markings, frequency of, in Nairnshire, 7.
- Dalriada, the kingdom of the Scots, 23.
- Darnaway, visit of Mary, Queen of Scots, to, 152—the great forest of, 164.
- Darnaway Castle, the situation and history of, 140, 141.
- David, Bishop of Moray, founder of the Scots College at Paris, 66.
- David I., unification of Scotland under, 44—changes introduced into Morayshire in the reign of, 45 *et seq.*—foundation of Kinloss Abbey by, 116.
- David II., capture of, at Neville's Cross, 142.
- Dicalidonæ, ancient name of Northern Picts, 8.
- Dickens, Charles, James Grant of Elgin and, 365.
- Dicynodonts, the discovery of, in the Elgin sandstone, 208.
- Donibristle, the murder of the Bonnie Earl of Moray at, 160 *et seq.*
- Douglas, Archibald, Earl of Moray, death of, at Arkinholm, 147.
- Duff, the early history of the family of, 228 *et seq.*
- Duff, Alexander, of Braco, 230.
- "Duff, Creely," 229.
- Duff, William, of Braco, elevation of, to the Irish peerage, 232—creation of, as Viscount Macduff and Earl Fife, 233.
- Duff, William, of Dipple, great trade connections formed by, 231.
- Duffus Castle, visit of Graham of Claverhouse to, 204.
- Dunbar, Black Agnes of, the story of, 144, 145.
- Dunbar, the beginning of the family of, 144—a thirty years' feud between the families of Innes and, 153 *et seq.*
- Duncan, King, parentage of, 32—defeat of, by Thorfinn, 33—murder of, by Macbeth, 34.

- Dunkeld, foundation of the bishopric of, by Alexander I., 54.
- Earls, differences between the early, in England and Scotland, 47—the maormors and the Scottish, 48—the Seven, of Scotland, *ib.*
- Edinburgh Morayshire Club, the, 385.
- Edinkillie, meaning of the name, 164.
- Edward I., the progress of, through Morayshire, 125 *et seq.*—hostile advance of, through Morayshire, 131—capture of Lochindorb by, 132.
- Edward III., spoliation of Moray by, 143.
- Ekkialsbakki, the burial-place of Sigurd, theories as to the site of, 31.
- Elgin, destruction of, by the Wolf of Badenoch, 68—spoliation of, by Alexander of the Isles, 70—erection of the Little Cross at, 71—the monasteries of the Greyfriars and the Blackfriars, 115—visit of Edward I. to, 126—description of the old castle, *ib.* *et seq.*—allegorical allusions to, by Florentius Volusenus, 128—Edward's reception in, *ib.*—burning of the castle, 130—visit of Mary Queen of Scots, 152—harrying of, by Montrose, 186—renewed spoliation of, by Montrose, 195—proceedings of the Commissioners appointed to "take order" with nonconformists, 201—Charles Edward at, 218—an election raid at, 226 *et seq.*—fictitious history of, 266—obligation of, to the Church, 267—Cosmo Innes's reflections on, 268—the feudal superiors of, 269—the Dunbars and, 270—the provosts of, 271—St Giles the provost of, 272—the crafts and guilds of, *ib.* *et seq.*—the brewers of, 276—the ale-tasters of, 277—education in, 280—foundation of the Academy, 281.
- Elgin Cathedral, establishment of, 60—its dedication in 1224, 61—the constitution of the Chapter, 62 *et seq.*—extent of the diocese, 64—patronage of Alexander II., *ib.*—early vicissitudes of, 65—account of the destruction of, by the Wolf of Badenoch, 67 *et seq.*—further despoliation of, by Highland robbers, 70—partial restoration of, by successive bishops, 71—progress made by successive bishops in restoring, 82—description of the complete buildings, 83 *et seq.*—a romantic story attaching to, 85—the Collegium, 86—the manse attached to, *ib.*, 87—duties and degrees of the various dignitaries connected with, 88 *et seq.*—the bishop's revenue, 91—mensal churches, 93—values of the prebends, 94—the effect of the Reformation on, 108—destruction caused to, by the bigotry of Covenanters, 109 *et seq.*—the labours of John Shanks at, 110.
- 'Elgin Courant,' history of the, 364.
- 'Elgin Courier,' history of the, 363.
- Falconar, William, Bishop of Moray, 105, 106.
- Falkirk, the battle of, 131.
- Fidach, King, 5.
- Findhorn, former importance of, 278.
- Fisher folk, superstitions existing among the, of Moray and Nairn, 338 *et seq.*—the Mavistoun, 349.
- Floods, the Moray, description of, 293 *et seq.*
- Forman, Bishop Andrew, character of, 78—embassies to France and England, 79—a visit to Pope Julius II., 80—Archbishop of Bruges, 81—Archbishop of St Andrews, *ib.*
- Forres, description of Sueno's Stone near, 35, 36—destruction of, by the Wolf of Badenoch, 67—burning of the castle of, 130—the antiquity of, 281—origin of the name, 282—historic remains, *ib.*
- 'Forres Gazette,' founding of the, 364.
- Forsyth, Isaac, the services of, to Elgin, 359, 360.
- Forsyth, Joseph, imprisonment of, at Valenciennes, 359.
- Fraser, Mr John, the 'St Ninian Press' established by, 365.
- Freuchie, the original seat of the Grants, 174.
- Garmouth, burning of, by Montrose, 195—landing of Charles II. at, 198.
- Gervadius, St, the foundation of Kin neddar Church by, 56—a tradition concerning, *ib.*, 56.
- Golf, antiquity of, at Nairn, 317.
- Gordon, Dr George, of Birnie, remarkable ability of, 381—friendship of, with eminent scientists, 382—the literary work of, 383.
- Gordon, John, Earl of Moray, short account of the pedigree of, 149—enmity of Lord James Stewart to, 150—death of, at the battle of Corrichie, 152.
- Gordon of Gordonstoun, Sir Robert, reputation of, as a wizard, 234 *et seq.*—the real character of, 237—the "pumpe" invented by, 239—the evil reputation of his son, 240.

- Gordon, the connection of the family of, with Moray, 172.
- Gordon Cumming, Col. William, military and sporting career of, 400, 401.
- Gordon Cumming, Miss C. F., extent of the travels of, 401—'Work for the Blind in China' by, 402.
- Gordon Cumming, Roualeyn, short military career of, 394—lion-hunting of, in South Africa, 395, 396—last expedition of, 397—the collections of, 398—'Five Years of a Hunter's Life' by, 399—character of, 400.
- Gordons of Gordonstoun, the pedigree of the, 234.
- Gospatric, the history of, the founder of the house of Dunbar, 143.
- Grant, history of the invasion of Strathspey by the clan, 173 *et seq.*—services to the Crown rendered by the clan, 176 *et seq.*—loyalty of the clan, during the '45, 212.
- Grant, James Augustus, early life of, 403—experiences of, in the Indian Mutiny, 404—offer of, to accompany Speke, 405—'A Walk across Africa' by, 406—illness of, in Africa, 407—subsequent military career of, 408—character of, 409.
- Grant, James, "Provost of Scotland," the Glen Grant Distillery founded by, 368—great services of, to railway enterprise in the north, *ib. et seq.*
- Grant, James, the 'Elgin Courier' started by, 363—editor of the 'Monthly Magazine,' 365—editor of the 'Morning Advertiser,' 366—versatility and energy of, 367—'History of the Newspaper Press' by, 368.
- Grant, James, the Good Sir James, founder of Grantown and of the Grant Fencibles, 225.
- Grant, James, third Laird of Freuchie, "Sheumas nan Creach," 177.
- Grant, James, seventh Laird of Freuchie, romantic marriage of, 182—neutrality of, in the campaigns of Montrose, 196 *et seq.*
- Grant, John, author of the 'Penny Wedding,' 362.
- Grant, John, fourth Laird of Freuchie, presence of, at Holyrood on night of Darnley's murder, 178.
- Grant, John, fifth Laird of Freuchie, great contemporary reputation of, 179.
- Grant, John, sixth Laird of Freuchie, "Sir John Sell-the-land," 180.
- Grant, Lady Anne, a famous election at Elgin and, 226 *et seq.*
- Grant, Ludovick, eighth Laird of Freuchie, nicknamed "the Highland King," 200—arbitrary conduct of, 207, 208—the scene at the abdication of, 209, 210.
- Grantown, the origin of, 175.
- Great North of Scotland Railway, 369, 370, 371.
- Gregor, Rev. Walter, 320.
- Gregorius, the first bishop of Moray, 54, 55.
- Guthrie, John, Bishop of Moray, citation of, before the Glasgow General Assembly, 100—trials of, 101, 102.
- Hay, "Willie," early career of, 383, 384—connection of, with Christopher North, 385—the Edinburgh Morayshire Club and, *ib. et seq.*—the "Lintie o' Moray" by, 387—other literary efforts by, *ib.*—character of, *ib. et seq.*
- Hepburn, Bishop Patrick, the ability and licentiousness of, 96—defiance of the Reformation by, and death of, 97.
- Highland Railway, the, 370.
- Huntly, growth of the power of the earldom of, 150.
- Hurry, Sir John, victory of, at Aberdeen, 187—cruelty of, to Montrose, *ib.*—alleged treason of, 194.
- Innes, Cosmo, connection of, with Moray, 373—'Registrum Moraviense' by, 374—private letters of, 375—intimacy with Charles St John, 377 *et seq.*
- Innes, John, Bishop of Moray, erection of the Castle of Spynie by, 71 *et seq.*
- Innes, the origin of the family of, 122—a thirty-years' feud between the families of Dunbar and, 153 *et seq.*
- Inverlochy, Montrose's victory at, 185.
- Inverness, visit of Mary, Queen of Scots, to, 152.
- Inverurie, defeat of the Black Comyn at the battle of, 135.
- James VI., conversion of Spynie into a temporal lordship by, 98 *et seq.*—attitude of, to Presbyterianism, 99.
- Julius Capitolinus, 13.
- Kilns, superstitions connected with, 318.
- Kilravock, Prince Charles at, 219—supposed visit of Cumberland to, 224—the interest of the castle of, 256—the antiquity of the Roses of, *ib.*

- Kilsyth, Montrose's victory at the battle of, 196.
- Kinloss, the legendary battle of, 35.
- Kinloss Abbey, legend regarding the foundation of, 116—Robert Reid, the one distinguished abbot of, 117—visit of Mary, Queen of Scots, to, 152.
- Kinnaird, the family of, 242—its ruin, 246.
- Kinneddar, the church of, sanctity of, 56—foundation of, by St Gervadius, *ib.*
- "Laigh of Moray," the, 290 *et seq.*
- Lauder, Sir Thomas Dick, historian of the Morayshire floods, 372.
- Leslie, Rev. William, literary work and eccentric character of, 360 *et seq.*
- 'Liber Pluscardensis,' 115.
- Little Earl of Moray, the, 148.
- Lochindorb, the Wolf of Badenoch's stronghold at, 67—capture of, by Edward I., 131—description of, *ib.*—capture of, by Edward III., 143.
- Lockhart, John Gibson, encouragement given to Charles St John by, 379.
- Lollius Urbicus, 13.
- London Morayshire Club, the, 385.
- Lossiemouth, the erection of a harbour at, 279—present prosperity of, 280.
- Lulach, the successor of Macbeth, short reign and murder of, 39.
- Lumphanan, death of Macbeth at the battle of, 39.
- MacAlpin, Kenneth, the triumph of, over the Picts, 23—alliance of, with the Norsemen, 25.
- Macbeth, the murder of Duncan by, 34—troubled reign of, 38—defeat of, at Scone by Siward and Malcolm, 39—death of, at the hands of Malcolm at Lumphanan, *ib.*—legendary associations concerning, 40.
- Macdonnell, Alastair, or "Colkitto," the bravery of, at the battle of Auldearn, 189 *et seq.*
- MacKenneth, Malcolm, alliance of, with the Norseman Sigurd the Stout, 32.
- Mackenzie, Henry, 225.
- Mackenzie, Murdoch, Episcopalian Bishop of Moray, 102, 103, 104.
- Macpherson, James, the execution of, 208, 209.
- Maelbrigd, the Maormor of Moray, fight between Sigurd and, 30.
- Man Cope or Coup, origin of the fisher name, 214.
- Malcolm, victory of, over Macbeth at Scone, 39—slaughter of Macbeth by, at Lumphanan, *ib.*—succession of, to the throne as Malcolm Canmore, *ib.*—invasions of Moray by, 43, 44—death of, *ib.*
- Maormor, meaning of the term, 41, 42.
- March, Earldom of, Moray united with the, 146.
- Marshall, William, the career of, 388—mechanical genius of, 389—musical genius of, 390—Gow's plagiarisms from, 391—list of compositions by, 392.
- Mary, Queen of Scots, royal progress north of, 152.
- Mavistoun, the extinct fishing village of, 37—the "fisher-gouks" of, 349.
- Miller, Mr James D., editor of the 'Forres Gazette,' 364.
- Milne, King, the story of the Gar-mouth family of, 198.
- Montrose, victory of, at Inverlochry, 185—entry of, into Elgin, *ib.*—campaign in the north, 186 *et seq.*—the battle of Auldearn, 189 *et seq.*—subsequent reprisals in Moray and Nairn, 194—destruction in Elgin, 195.
- Moravia, the boundaries of the principality of, 24.
- Moray, the province of, ancient boundaries of, 3 *et seq.*—derivation of the name, 4—early Pictish inhabitants, *ib.* *et seq.*—prehistoric relics, 6, 7—the Romans in, 10 *et seq.*—introduction of Christianity into, 17, 18—attacks of the Norsemen on, 28—the reign of Sigurd in, 30—the only great battle in, 33—the independence of, under Canmore, 40—invasions of, by Malcolm, 43, 44—end of the direct line of maormors in, 44—changes introduced into, by David I., 45 *et seq.*—the creation of thanes, *ib.*—list of thanes in, 46—the end of the "province" of, 49—foundation of the Bishopric of, by Alexander I., 54—the effect of the Reformation in, 97 *et seq.*—the condition of, in the twelfth century, 122—the "plantation" of, by Malcolm IV., *ib.*—the beginning of Highland hostility to, 123—sympathy of, with the claims of Bruce, 124—the presence of Edward I. in, 125 *et seq.*—hostile incursion of Edward I. and capture of Lochindorb, 131—spoliation of, by Edward III., 143—the Good Earl of, 148, 149—the two shires of, 167—the three most important families in,

- 171—the Gordons and, 172—a royalist plot in, 197—visitation of the Nonconformity Commission, 202—the foreign trade of, 278—the population of, 287—the Celtic element in, 288—the area of, *ib.*—census of occupations in, *ib.* 288—the Laigh of, 290—climate, 291—rainfall, 292—account of the floods, 293 *et seq.*—the geology of, 298—the soil of, 299—the peat of, 300—recent advance of, in agriculture, 301—arable area of, 302—lumber trade of, 303—the Morayshire Farmers' Club, 304—former agricultural methods in, 305—old farm-buildings in, 306—use of peat in, 307—old rural life in, 308—description of an old-time penny-wedding in, 309 *et seq.*—lyke-wakes in, 312—the old peasantry of, 315—former amusements of the people of, 316—the farm kilns of, 318—old beliefs in, 319—private stills in, 320—the “gentle beggars” of, 321—old Church festivals in, 323 *et seq.*—Hogmanay rejoicings in, 326—cases of crop-failures in, 329—old superstitions in, 330 *et seq.*—witches in, 334 *et seq.*—the fisher-folk of, 338—the “burning of the clavic,” 339—“to-names,” 342—superstitions among the fishers of, 343 *et seq.*
- Moray, Earldom of, the creation of, 136—the families that have held it, 137—some famous names connected with, *ib.*—the family of Dunbar and, 144 *et seq.*
- Moray, Sir Andrew, account of the pedigree of, 130—support given to Wallace by, *ib.*—death of, at the battle of Stirling, 131.
- Moray, the Little Earl of, 148.
- ‘Moray and Nairn Express,’ founding of the, 364.
- Morayshire Club, the Edinburgh, 385—the London, *ib.*
- Morayshire Farmers' Club, the, 304.
- Morayshire Railway, the establishment of the, 368 *et seq.*
- Moy, narrow escape of Charles Edward at, 216—the Rout of, 217.
- Moyness, visit of Mary, Queen of Scots, to, 152.
- Nairn, evidence of, being a Scandinavian settlement, 37—arrival of Sir John Cope at, 214—Cumberland's entry into, 221—futile advance of Charles Edward on, 223—Sir John Campbell secures heritable Sheriffship of, 254—early history of, 283—St Ninian and, *ib.*—recent progress of, 284—the Michaelmas Market in, 325.
- Nairnshire, large number of cup-markings in, 7—traces of Norse influence in, 37—no Danish evidences in, 38—the chief families of, 248—the population of, 287—the Celtic element in, 288—census of occupations in, 289—general configuration of, *ib.*—climate of, 291—the Floods of '29, 293 *et seq.*—the soil of, 299—advances in agriculture in, 301—arable area of, 302—Farmers' Society of, 304—the Michaelmas Market in Nairn, 325—the crops of, 329—old superstitions in, 330 *et seq.*—witchcraft in, 334 *et seq.*—the custom of “casting the cavel” in, 340—fisher superstitions in, 343 *et seq.*—the fishers of Mavistoun, 349—the energy and progress of, 352.
- ‘Nairnshire, History of,’ Mr George Bain's, 365.
- ‘Nairnshire Telegraph,’ the, 365.
- Neville's Cross, the battle of, 143.
- Norsemen, alliance between the Scots and, 25—the invasions of Moravia by the, 26 *et seq.*—account of the, 27 *et seq.*—early appearances of, in Scotland, 28—attacks on Moravia by Thorstein and Sigurd, *ib.*—sudden end of the influence of, in Scotland, 34.
- Olaf the White, the Norse king of Dublin, 28.
- Old Meldrum, defeat of the Black Comyn at the battle of, 135.
- Ossian, references to the Scandinavians in, 26.
- Palmerston, Lord, anecdote of, and Grant of the Nile, 406.
- Pannatia, an ancient Pictish town, 8.
- Paris, foundation of the Scots College at, by Bishop David de Moravia, 66.
- Penny wedding, description of an old-time, in Morayshire, 308 *et seq.*
- Philiphaugh, the battle of, 196.
- Picts, early divisions of the, 14—nature of the government among the, 15—Scone, the capital of the, *ib.*—the mythical kings of the, *ib.*—the law of succession among the, 16—the dawn of real history concerning the, *ib.*—Brude, king of the, *ib.* *et seq.*—early quarrels of, with the Scots, 23—final overthrow of the, by Kenneth MacAlpin, *ib.*
- Picts of Moray, the, 4—the religion of, 6—relics of, *ib.* *et seq.*—social polity of, 8—the towns of, *ib.* *et seq.*

- opposition shown by, to the advance of Severus, 13—four blank centuries in the history of, 14—tribal divisions among the, *ib.*—nature of government among the, 15—introduction of Christianity among, 17, 18.
- Pitgaveny, the reputed scene of King Duncan's murder, 34.
- Pluscarden Priory, foundation of, by Alexander II., 65—situation of, 111—description of, 112—the monks of, 113—the history of, 114—the 'Liber Pluscardensis,' 115.
- Pteroton Stratopedon, an ancient Pictish town, 8, 12.
- Ptolemy, the geographer, 8.
- Poroton, the mythical Roman, identified with the Winged Camp, 12.
- Railway, establishment of the Morayshire, 368 *et seq.*—the Inverness and Aberdeen Junction, 369—the Great North of Scotland, *ib.*, 371—the Inverness and Nairn, 369—the Highland, 370—the Strathspéy, *ib.*
- Randolph, John, third Earl of Moray, adventurous career and death of, at Neville's Cross, 142.
- Randolph, Thomas, first Earl of Moray, story of, at Bannockburn, 138—brilliant services of, 139—the munificent charter granted to, *ib.*—the family of, 141.
- Rapenache, the place where Edward I. spent his first night in Morayshire, 126.
- Reformation, the effect of the, in Moray, 97 *et seq.*
- Reid, Robert, a distinguished abbot of Kinloss, 116.
- Rhind, Dr William, 'Recollections of William Hay' by, 386.
- Richard of Cirencester, 11, 12.
- Roman Well of Burghead, description of the so-called, 19, 20.
- Romans, Burghead a reputed military station of the, 11—the expedition of Severus, 13—Lollius Urbicus in the North, *ib.*—theories regarding the presence of, in the Moray Firth, *ib.*
- Ronnell bell, the, in the church of Burnie, 55.
- Rose of Kilravock, the antiquity of the family of, 256.
- Roseisle, early Christian settlement at, 18.
- Ross, Rev. Gilbert, a covenanting vandal, 109.
- Roy, General, 'Military Antiquities of the Romans in North Britain' by, 10, 11, 12.
- Scandinavians, the invasion of Scotland by two distinct races of, 25.
- Scone, the capital of the Pictish kingdom, 15—defeat of Macbeth at, 39.
- Scotia, the subsumption of the name of Alban in that of, 24.
- Scots, first appearance of the, in history, 23—the limits of their kingdom, 24—triumph of the, over the Picts, 25.
- Scots College at Paris, foundation of, by Bishop David de Moravia, 66.
- Seton, Alexander, Chancellor of Scotland, provost of Elgin, 271.
- Severus, the expeditions of, beyond the Grampians, 13.
- Shanks, John, a notable keeper of Elgin Cathedral, 110, 111.
- Shaw, Lachlan, career of, 357—the 'History of the Province of Moray' by, 358.
- Sheriff, the history and evolution of the office of, 165 *et seq.*—the hereditary, 167.
- Sigurd, invasion of Moravia by, 28—probable foundation of Burghead by, 29—strange death of, 30, 31.
- Sigurd the Stout, victory of, at Skitten, 31—establishment of the Moray Firth as the northern boundary of Moray, 32—alliance with Malcolm MacKenneth, *ib.*—death of, *ib.*
- Siward, Earl of Northumberland, contests of, with Macbeth, 38, 39.
- Skitten, battle of, between Finlay of Moray and Sigurd the Stout, 31.
- Speke, Captain, the third expedition of, 404 *et seq.*—death of, 408.
- Spey, the river, and its strath, 173.
- Speymouth, the Duke of Cumberland at, 220.
- Spynie, the beauty of the old loch of, 58—prophecy concerning, 59—no traces remaining of the old church of, *ib.*—conversion of the Bishopric into a temporal lordship of, 98.
- Spynie, Palace of, erection of the, by Bishop Innes, 71—description of the building, 72 *et seq.*—David's Tower, 72—associations connected with, 73, 74.
- St Giles, election of, to the provostship of Elgin, 272.
- St John, Charles, friendship of, with Cosmo Innes, 377 *et seq.*—'Wild Sports and Natural History of the Highlands' by, 379—other works by, 380.
- 'St Ninian Press,' the, 365.
- Stewart, Alexander, Bishop of Moray, 95.
- Stewart, Bishop David, the keep of the

- Palace of Spynie built by, 76, 77—feud with the Earl of Huntly, *ib.*
- Stewart, Francis, ninth Earl of Moray, planting of Darnaway forest by, 164.
- Stewart, James, the Bonnie Earl of Moray, two pictures of, 156—the Queen's favour for, 157—the feud of, with Huntly, 158 *et seq.*—his brutal murder, 160 *et seq.*
- Stewart, James, the Good Earl of Moray, controversies concerning, 148—inordinate ambition of, 149—created Earl of Moray, 153—assassination of, *ib.*
- Stewart, Lady Mary, romantic marriage of, 183—character of, *ib.*
- Stone Bulls of Burghead, description of the, 21.
- Stone-circles, prevalence of, in Moray and Nairn, 6, 7.
- Sueno's Stone, near Forres, account of, and theories concerning, 35, 36.
- Tamia, an ancient Pictish town, 8.
- Taylor, John, the Water Poet, visit of, to Ballachastell in 1618, 180.
- Thanes, the conversion of toshachs into, by David I., 45 *et seq.*—difference between English and Scottish, 46—the Morayshire, *ib.*
- Thorfinn, the son of Sigurd the Stout, created Earl of Caithness, 32—victory of, at Torfness, over King Duncan, 33—description of, *ib.*—alliance of, with Macbeth, 38—defeat and death of, 43.
- Thorstein the Red, invasion of Moravia by, 28.
- Toeny, Simon de, Bishop of Moray, 55.
- Torfness, the battle of, 33.
- Tuessis, an ancient Pictish town, 8.
- Tulloch, Robert, a town-clerk of Forres, story of, 211.
- Unthank, early Christian settlement at, 18.
- Urquhart, Priory of, union of, with Pluscarden, 114.
- Vacomagans, Ptolemy's account of the, 8.
- Vikings, nature of the, 26.
- Volusenus, Florentius. See Wilsón, Florence.
- Wilson, Florence, the chapel of Elgin Castle alluded to by, 128—distinguished testimony to the eminence of, 356.
- Winchester, Bishop John of, great temporal power of, 75, 76.
- Witchcraft, instances of, in Moray and Nairn, 334.
- Young, H. W., "Notes on the Remains of Burghead" by, 10.









